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New Statesman

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LABOUR

The old guard is back

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New Statesman

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A month of the right
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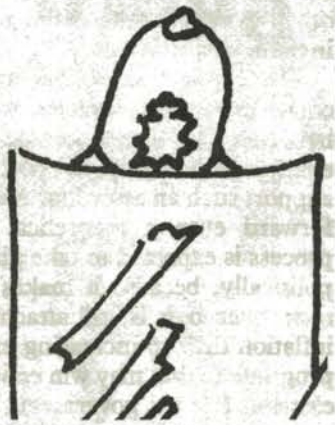

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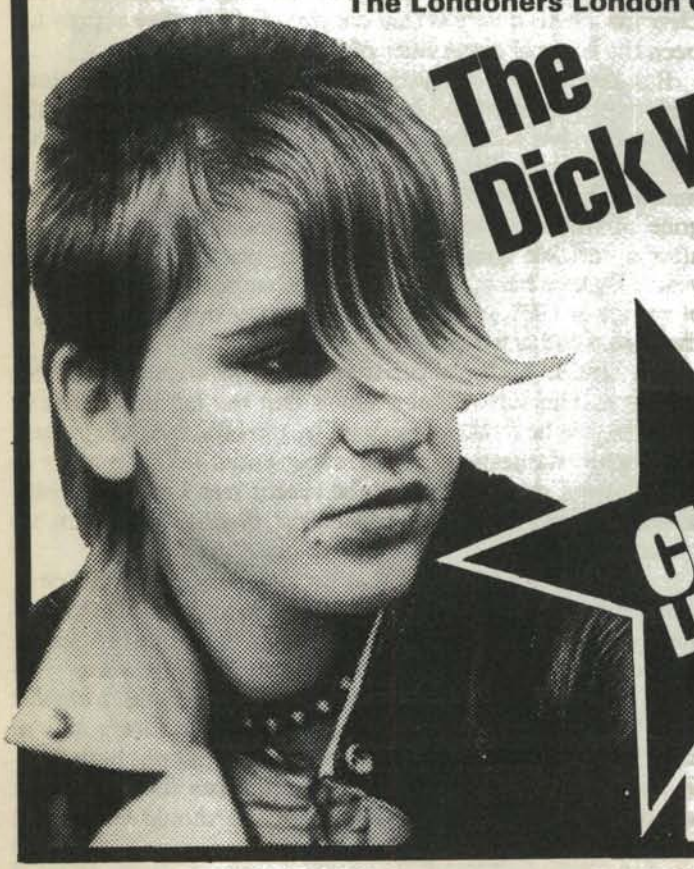

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Free lonely hearts ads until Christmas

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New Statesman Vol 104 No 2695 12 November 1982

A time for angry laughter

IF FURTHER PROOF was still needed that this government has no policy for restoring British industry and commerce, it was there in full measure in the autumn economic statement from Sir Geoffrey Howe in the House of Commons on Monday. Sir Geoffrey is a lawyer. He has a lawyer's mind and manner. Even after three and a half years at the Treasury, he conveys no sense of understanding economic processes. Sermons, delivered in a flat monotone and constructed of unproved assertions, have become his hallmark as Chancellor.

Because both he and the Prime Minister are impressively impervious to proof of the logical and mathematical errors on which their economic policy is in theory based, the political debate about economic policy is still being conducted in terms of the government's choosing.

There has been a slight change in the *tone* of what the government has been saying about unemployment. 'Unemployment remains the nation's most distressing problem', Howe brought himself to say on Monday. 'My Government are deeply aware of the anxieties and distress caused by unemployment', were the words put by the government into the Queen's mouth for the opening of Parliament last week. And, in the subsequent debate on the Queen's Speech, Mrs Thatcher let herself go to the point of agreeing that 'The tragedy of unemployment deserves the most serious and sustained response'.

Now even her most vitriolic critics would concede that a 'serious and sustained response' is a powerful political and administrative phenomenon. Sir Geoffrey's autumn statement might, therefore, have been expected to contain evidence of the shape of this proposed 'serious and sustained response'. In the event it contained precisely nothing. Every announcement of increased spending here was balanced by news of savings there. Every cut in national insurance imposts in one place was balanced by causing increases in another. The total net changes in the impact of government policy on the economy have to be measured in a few hundred million pounds. The total was only a fraction of the money spent on the Falklands war, or of the money that will now be spent giving those islanders what Mrs Thatcher optimistically described as a 'secure and bright future'.

Given these facts, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion reached by Robert Parry (before he was expelled from the Commons for expressing it) that, on unemployment, Mrs Thatcher is 'a liar and a hypocrite'. To put it at its most neutral, the priority that Mrs Thatcher attaches to the issue of unemployment is less than the priority she gives to the Falkland Islands, the armed forces, the improvement of police pay, the subsidising of farmers, the flogging off of national assets like the British National Oil Corporation at less than their face value – and a whole list of other things to which she is prepared to devote more government time and money.

THE PERNICIOUS ASPECT of the way the government presents its case, however, is the way in which it links unemployment and inflation. Its assertions have been demolished by economists, but they have not yet been demolished *politically*. Thus the Queen's Speech included the statement – made as if it was an undeniable act – that policies to produce sustainable growth in the economy and reduce the numbers out of work will require the achievement of a continuuing fall in the rate of inflation.

The implication of that non-sequitur is that, as inflation comes down, employment will go up; and that the faster it happens, the better for the unemployed. But there is no empirical evidence in post-war industrial economies to support such an assertion. And the government has never put forward even a theoretical economic model of how the process is expected to take place. The statement is important politically, because it makes it quite clear that the government even now is still attaching greater priority to reducing inflation than to increasing employment. As a Tory political programme that may win enough votes to help, in the general election. But the government must not be allowed, simply by repeated assertion, to persuade people that the statement has any *economic* validity.

The same goes for the Chancellor's ploddingly heroic attempts to convince others that his brand of monetarism and his tattered medium-term financial strategy are still alive. 'During the past year, monetary conditions have exerted downward pressure on price rises and substantial progress has been made against inflation,' he said on Monday. The clear implication here is that control of the money supply has been the cause of lower rates of inflation.

But there is no convincing evidence that the one follows directly from the other. Indeed, this is the first time that the Chancellor has had the audacity to claim that monetary conditions in a given year determine prices in that same twelve months. Even the most gung-ho monetarist to date has not gone further than to suggest that the one affects the other after a variable time-lag of between one and a half to two years. On this basis, given what was happening to the supply of money in 1981, inflation should now be over 15 per cent, if the theory had any validity.

But that is a cheap debating point to score against Sir Geoffrey. The substantial point is that the fall in the rate of inflation can be totally explained by the effects of the longest and deepest domestic recession experienced in this country in this century, combined with the recent trend in world commodity prices. Unproven monetarist dogmas can claim no credit.

At this stage, it is critical that the economic performance of this government should be correctly recorded. The consequences of what has been wantonly done to reduce the output on the British economy will lie with us for generations – a loss since 1979 that can never be recovered and which should have been available to invest in the country's future and to raise its increasingly depressed standards of living, both public and private. When Mrs Thatcher claims success on the economic front, as she does and will, she should be greeted by angry and derisive laughter. □

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SDP sunk in private gloom

THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS' public hopes of forming the next Government, in alliance with the Liberals, have been dealt a severe blow by Mike Thomas MP, chairman of the SDP's Organisation Committee. According to documents seen by the *New Statesman*, the committee has accepted Mr Thomas' advice that the party's prospects are so poor that they must 'focus our efforts in about 60-70 seats'.

Both in a private letter to Roy Jenkins and in a draft paper, *SDP Organisational Strategy to the General Election*, Mr Thomas has confronted the SDP leadership with a bleak view of the SDP's electoral future. Mr Thomas has bluntly told his colleagues: first, that the SDP has done extremely badly out of the division of seats with the Liberals; and second, that the SDP must now devote its resources not to helping elect a Liberal/SDP Government, but to preventing the SDP being humiliated.

On 20 September – the day after Mr Jenkins concluded his deal on seats with David Steel, the Liberal leader – Mr Thomas wrote to Mr Jenkins and argued that the deal breached the terms of the outline agreement reached with the Liberals last winter:

> We have obtained nothing like the 2:1 advantage in the 'silver' seats that the [SDP] Steering Committee set as the terms for conceding to the Liberals their 50 'gold' seats . . .
> Over most of south and south west England we now have little prospect of winning any of the seats allocated to us. The settlement in West Yorkshire, where the Liberals' record is very poor indeed, is ridiculously generous to them. Why on earth should they have our best prospect seat in Essex when they have almost all the more winnable seats in Essex? How can it be logical for them to fight Tony Benn in Bristol rather than us? . . .
> On the basic mathematics the seats deal is very bad for us, we could easily end up with only 15-25 of the first 100 seats to be won and 5-10 of the first 50 . . .
> I shall not publicly oppose [the deal], but I should not like my self-enforced silence to be interpreted as assent. . .
>
> We are now in danger of getting the worst of all worlds: a seats deal that is very bad for the SDP, and a blurring of the SDP's image within the Alliance that minimises the total number of seats won and reduces to humiliating levels (at which our Party might not even survive) the seats within that total won by the SDP.

The following week Mr Thomas circulated to leading SDP MPs and officials his draft election strategy. He acknowledges that because of the seat allocation 'it will be particularly difficult for the SDP to win seats' and proceeds to list 58 seats which, he believes, the SDP could win by securing an above-average swing (see table). In addition, Mr Thomas has identified 12 Conservative seats which might fall to the SDP if the Conservative vote nationally collapses.

Mr Thomas is gloomy about the chances of today's SDP MPs – himself included – keeping their seats. They are listed in group two, 'a few of which are in the first 200 [Alliance] seats to be won', rather than in group one, 'likely to be won in the first 100' (according to the national electoral 'swing').

Of the SDP MPs, Mr Thomas reckons that the best chances belong to Roy Jenkins at Hillhead ('essentially a group one seat'), Robert MacLennan at Caithness & Sutherland ('a Scottish special situation') and John Roper at Farnworth ('in the promising category, but may have the advantages of incumbency diminished by the boundary changes'). Mr Thomas sees particular problems for the ex-Tory, Christopher Brocklebank-Fowler in Norfolk North West. Here, writes Mr Thomas, 'the strategy must be to hold as much former Conservative allegiance as possible, and to collapse the Labour vote'. Of Shirley Williams's prospects at Crosby, Mr Thomas comments despondently 'we shall have to make the most of the incumbency in what is otherwise an essentially rather Tory seat'.

Mr Thomas concludes that 'our national presentation . . . must be heavily geared to achieving good results in group two . . . These are almost without exception seats where there is a poor Liberal base, and where heavy accent on our relationship with the Liberals is unlikely to help us (and may in fact hinder).' He therefore proposes that local organisers be recruited to run campaigns in these seats, and that all SDP activity, from 'our political and public posture' at national level, down to the fighting of local government elections, be directed towards the best electoral result in the target seats.

On 5 October the SDP Organisation Committee discussed Mr Thomas's proposals, and accepted them in outline. The main qualification was that a few more seats might be added to the target list, as Mr Thomas conceded in a subsequent paper to his colleagues: 'There may be some seats where winnability is enhanced by an opposing party's candidate, for example, if Ken Livingstone were to oust Reg Freeson in Brent East.'

Peter Kellner

The SDP's target seats

Group 1

'Very promising seats, likely to be won in the first 100, with Conservative incumbents and a high Liberal base.'

Bath	Luton North
Cambridge	Manchester Withington
Basildon	Stevenage
High Peak	Milton Keynes
Lincoln	*(but not on old boundaries)*

Group 2

'Labour seats, a few of which are in (or the rest of which might be pushed into) the first 200 seats to be won, by a campaign aimed at attacking the Labour vote and collapsing the Tory vote tactically.'

Sitting SDP MP

Dewsbury	Leyton
Leicester East	Liverpool W Derby
Hackney S & Shoreditch	Islington North
Woolwich E	Plymouth Devonport
Liverpool Toxteth	Stockton
Islington South	Hayes
Liverpool Kirkdale	& Harlington
Bradford West	Newcastle East
Renfrewshire W	Erith & Crayford
Stockport South	Thornaby
Southampton Itchen	Wrexham

No sitting SDP MP

Grimsby	Nuneaton
Thurrock	Norwich S
Halifax	Cumbernauld
Swindon	Dunfermline W
Bradford East	Alyn & Deeside
Dulwich	Cardiff NE
Leigh	Carmarthen
Bolton NW	Hammersmith N
York	Norwood
Blyth Valley	Lewisham E
Bury South	Darlington
Carlisle	

Group 3

'A number of seats of SDP MPs fall into special categories.'

Norfolk NW
Glasgow Hillhead
Caithness & Sunderland
Farnworth
Crosby

Thomas: why the smile?

Billing and Kooing

ON THE evening of 26 October, Giles O'Bryen was sitting innocently at home when Muriel Burden of the *Sun* rang to ask to speak to Bea Nash, close acquaintance of one Koo Stark. Her paper, she explained, was planning to run centre page photos of Ms Stark, naked, taken from a film called *The Adolescents* and wanted to give Ms Stark a chance to comment.

Mr O'Bryen, who has never met either Ms Stark or Ms Nash, let alone lived with either of them, was startled. Nonetheless, he saw the possibilities in the situation. The press had evidently gone stark staring mad and would accept any morsel. He suggested the *Sun* ring back in half an hour when he would try to get Koo to the phone. Ms Burden (who was labouring under the delusion that she had got hold of the phone number of Ms Nash's home in Abingdon Road, West London) could not wait that long and rang twice more to be told O'Bryen was expecting Koo at his own, different address. Ms Burden looked that up and arrived on his doorstep to wait for Ms Stark. There Mr O'Bryen's unsuspecting sister Sophie found her. Was Ms Stark inside, asked Ms Burden? Get lost, replied Sophie, or words to that effect.

The matter might have ended there – but the next day another *Sun* journalist, Leslie Childe, also rang Mr O'Bryen twice to inquire into the state of affairs between Koo and Andy. Mr O'Bryen suggested they meet at the Ritz to discuss the matter further over tea. Unfortunately the Ritz was full, so they repaired to a bench in Green Park, where £50 changed hands. Mr Childe started by asking if Giles had ever slept with Koo and how often Prince Andrew had. Mr O'Bryen told him that he had first met Koo at the premiere for Woody Allen's *Stardust Memories* in Los Angeles, back in 1979. He went on to tell Childe, he says, what he believed the *Sun* journalist wanted to hear: Koo was desolate, the romance was over, she would be flying home to the US within the week. Mr Childe did not ask any questions to test the story.

The next day, the *Sun* printed an exclusive – for indeed that was what it was: 'Koo ready to quit Britain'. The piece quoted 23-year-old scriptwriter Giles O'Bryen, a 'close friend' of Koo's, as saying that Koo had confided in him: 'I'm bitterly disappointed at the way things have gone.' Mr O'Bryen points out that he never said that. He was rung once more by the *Sun* on the following Sunday. The

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KOO READY TO QUIT BRITAIN!
She realises her romance with Andrew has 'cooled'
By LESLIE CHILDE
PRINCE Andrew's porn star girlfriend, Koo Stark, is all set to leave Britain, it was revealed last night.
Sun Exclusiv
Koo, right, and Bea

People had run a story that Koo was back at the Palace. Was he surprised? 'Yes indeed,' said Mr O'Bryen, 'incredibly surprised.'

The *Sun*, however, is not the only paper to have had difficulty in getting authentic Stark stories. On Wednesday, 27 October, the first edition of the *Daily Express* ran a front page story from the diarist William Hickey saying Koo and Andy were still hitting it off back in London. By the second edition this had changed to 'Koo is back and it's all over'. Ms Stark's 'agent', Michelle Fox, was quoted as saying 'the ending of a romance in the public eye is terribly hard'. Hickey was relegated inside. But he stuck to his guns. The next day he wrote: 'It's love, no matter what they say.' Ms Fox was now quoted as saying 'I certainly didn't say the romance was off.' The *Express* explains: 'Our Thursday story appears to be a denial of what we said the day before, but it isn't. It's just a changing story.'

And Mr O'Bryen? He is giving his money to charity – unless the *Sun* reclaims it.

PS: This information, first learned 10 days after the event, also cost the New Statesman *£50.*

Patrick Wintour

Rochdale widow kept in dark

THE CASE of another Rochdale worker who died from lung cancer and asbestosis (*NS*, 15 October) reveals an unusual level of involvement by the local asbestos firm TBA Industrial Products Limited – a subsidiary of the giant multinational Turner and Newall. It appears that this company has access not only to Health Service records on its employees, but also to specimens from their lungs.

Jack Myers was one of their spinners for 19 years until in October 1970 he was diagnosed as suffering from lung cancer. (The lung cancer rate among long-term TBA workers is almost three times normal.) Although an operation was performed in which his left lung was removed, he died six months later in hospital. On his death certificate the cause of death is given succinctly as 'Cerebral Thrombosis' – a blood clot in the brain. There was no mention of lung cancer, asbestosis or industrial disease and no inquest or coroner's post mortem took place.

However, despite this record of a seemingly natural death, Mrs Myers soon afterwards surprisingly started to receive Industrial Death Widows' Benefit from the DHSS. No explanation for this uncharacteristic generosity was given until earlier this year. After watching Yorkshire TV's documentary on asbestos disease in Rochdale, Jack Myers's son Kenneth wrote to the local Pneumoconiosis Medical Panel (PMP) who decide on asbestosis cases for widows' benefit.

Their reply both startled and angered him. It revealed that his father's true cause of death was lung cancer, in which asbestosis was 'a material factor'. Even more disturbing, this had been known at the time by the employers TBA. They had, in fact, for the last 11 years been in possession of specimens of the removed lung and a pathologist's report which they had lent to the Panel (PMP) on request in 1971. It was on the basis of this evidence that the Panel had awarded Mrs Myers her 55p a week Industrial Widows' Benefit.

Kenneth Myers points out that this is only the state benefit and that his mother, who is now in a nursing home, could have claimed several thousands of pounds compensation had this information been known to her at the time. 'Why', he asks, 'was medical information – even bits of my father's lungs – given to his employers but kept from the family who may have wanted to sue?' Mr Myers will now take legal action on behalf of his mother, unless it is ruled out of time on account of the long delay since his father's death.

Many people would question this sharing of expertise and information between the DHSS Medical Panel and an asbestos company, who may be involved in a legal claim over liability. But it seems to be a regular occurrence.

James Cutler

MISCELLANY

Public penalty

Much fuming and growling from local government leaders after Sir Geoffrey Howe's 'autumn statement' this week. They are particularly incensed by the fact that, although Howe's reduction of the National Insurance surcharge received much publicity, hardly anyone pointed out that this applies only to employers in the private sector: local councils will still have to pay the full rate. Even so, they are losing £140m of grants on the assumption that private contractors will now charge less.

Pressure on nukes

Last Saturday, at London's Central Hall, a national campaign to stop Pressurised Water Reactors – regarded as one of the most dangerous forms of generating nuclear power – being built in Britain was launched by the Anti-Nuclear Campaign. It immediately faced a familiar strategic problem: should it campaign only against the PWRs, which will get the support of unions like ASTMS, the Transport and General Workers and the General and Municipal Workers; or should it, as ecological campaigners preferred, campaign against nuclear power in principle, whatever its application and whatever form it takes. Ian Gibson from ASTMS told the conference that 'we haven't a mass movement on the streets yet' which could oppose nuclear power altogether and the Commmunist Party's Mick Costello argued that the campaign should be selective as many jobs were at risk in heavy electrical engineering. Unions are prepared to oppose PWRs in particular because their design and technology is American. Since the accident to the PWR at Three Mile Island three years ago, the American nuclear industry has been in the doldrums.

Howe nott to be king

Whenever two or three Tory MPs are gathered together these days, conversation turns to the Impending Reshuffle. Will John Nott be replaced by Michael Heseltine or Peter Walker? Whatever happens, one likely beneficiary is Tom King, Heseltine's sidekick at the Department of the Environment: Mrs Thatcher thinks he's the bee's knees, the cat's whiskers and the peacock's penis. Someone must also be found to replace Hailsham as Lord Chancellor. Lord Rawlinson is still the obvious choice, but it's possible that Sir Michael Havers could be kicked upstairs and given the post. The most intriguing name being canvassed for the job is that of Sir Geoffrey Howe, QC. One move which seems almost certain is that the ailing Nicholas Edwards, Secretary of State for Wales, will be given early retirement; probable successor is Wyn Roberts, MP for Conway.

Star Wars

The hitherto inseparable and inscrutable relationship between the *Morning Star* and Communist Party which has daunted many a socialist wanting a daily paper of the Left appears to have become seriously strained. For the first time in its history, the paper's editor, Tony Chater, has refused to follow a 'recommendation' made to him by the party's executive committee. During the summer the paper published a blast by AUEW-TASS official Barbara Switzer (who is not in the Communist Party) against an article published in the *Guardian* by feminist journalist Beatrix Campbell (a long-time party member). Ms Campbell had heretically questioned the readiness of male trade unionists to defend women's interests. Ms Campbell asked for the right of reply in the *Morning Star*. The editor refused. The executive committee in September decided Ms Campbell should have the right of reply. Since then, also unprecedented in the *Star*'s history, the NUJ chapel has twice passed resolutions urging their editor to publish Ms Campbell's reply. He has ignored them all. It remains to be seen whether the executive committee, which meets this weekend with a resolution on the *Morning Star* on its agenda, will try to avert the growing split between the party and its organ.

Lothian Tories get a grip

A RARE INSIGHT into the ruthless way in which the Conservatives have taken control of the administration of Lothian Regional Council is given by a comprehensive series of confidential documents leaked from the Conservative Group. They show how an inner-group of Tories have, with the co-operation of some key officials, hijacked the council's decision-making procedure.

After the regional elections last May, Labour lost control of Lothian and the Conservatives, with the crucial support of the three Liberal/Social Democrat Alliance councillors, formed the administration. One of the Tories' first moves was to establish a 'Centre Group' of four or five leading Tory councillors, which arranged to meet regularly with the top officials in order to vet all major proposals before they were submitted to the relevant council committees. In particular, all 'politically sensitive' reports should, in the view of Tory convenor Brian Meek, go to the

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group first. The minutes of practically all these meetings and other secret documents have been acquired by *Social Work Today* magazine.

At the first meeting on 31 May, the Chief Executive Robert Peggie obligingly proposed reorganising the system so that departmental reports would be channelled via himself and the Finance Director Blair Grosset 'into the Conservative Group centre'. Since then all important council proposals on roads, education, social work and much else have been discussed in detail and often amended at the Centre Group meetings.

A disproportionate amount of discussion among the Tory elite seems to have focused on public relations. Brian Meek told the first meeting that in recent years Lothian had had too much publicity and 'in future it was his intention that rather than have matters publicised, the Conservative Group would wish to meet and influence people who mattered.'

The minutes disclose that officials and Tory councillors do not always agree – the councillors were evidently deeply divided about whether or not to support the provision of a new shooting range. Lothian's social work director, Roger Kent, one of the few department heads who refuses to accept cutbacks without a struggle, has clearly been a source of mounting irritation for Tory councillors and other officials.

At the start of August he was taken to task for a forthright report on the damaging effect of spending cuts on social services. Later the same month, when he submitted a draft 10-year programme for social work capital spending, Mr Grosset attacked the plan as 'impossible' and likely to lead to 'continued disappointments'. Mr Kent was also strongly criticised for being the only director who had refused to accept staffing cuts. According to the minutes, both Brian Meek and Robert Peggie said that 'there was no question of a stalemate being reached with social work – the Director simply had to be *told* that he would be required to find the proportion of posts involved.'

At a special weekend seminar for all Conservative councillors, held last month in the Marine Hotel, North Berwick, it was decided to aim to cut £20 million off next year's budget – though, as the minutes record, 'the point was made that many electoral divisions which had returned Conservative councillors were in great need of the Council's services and that this should not be lost sight of.'

The leader of Lothian's Labour Group, John Mulvey, said that even though the Tories did not have an overall majority 'they have taken a grip of the whole administration of the council in a way that I don't think we ever did in four years.'

Rob Edwards

Export boom in arms for Indonesia

A NEW ROUND of arms sales to Indonesia is planned by British government officials, according to a classified report obtained by the *New Statesman*. The report reveals that the Department of Trade is planning to raise Indonesia's creditworthiness for export guarantees to at least £1 billion this year and £2 billion overall. Of this, £340 million would go for arms sales.

The Conservative government's attitude to Indonesia, which almost seven years ago invaded the former Portuguese colony of East Timor, is in distinct contrast to the stance taken against invading Argentina this year, when ministers successfully won the arms and trade embargoes against Argentina. More than 100,000 of the inhabitants of East Timor are believed to have died during the Indonesian repression. In indonesia up to a million leftists and others are estimated to have died since the dictatorship of President Soeharto was established in 1965.

According to a paper prepared by the Country Policy Division of the Export Credits Guarantee Department two months ago, an official visit to Indonesia in February by Lord Carrington and an entourage of businessmen was successful in drumming up arms business – all related directly to the continued repression in East Timor. The items they hope to sell are

- A Mark 15 Frigate, worth £273.3 million, and possibly Type 21 Frigates
- Five British Aerospace Hawk aircraft, worth £29 million
- Eleven Armoured Security Vehicles, worth £1.2 million
- Sea Wolf missile launchers, worth £36 million in cash.

It is a safe sale because, as the document notes, there is in Indonesia 'No effective challenge to the present system of government . . . the existing regime is unlikely to change.'

This week, the United Nations is voting on self-determination for East Timor, on which this government has always abstained. Liberal peer Lord Avebury told the United Nations this week that Britain was guilty of 'complicity and acquiescence' in Indonesian repression. As the task force sailed against Argentian repression in May, *Tapol*, the British Committee for the Defence of Political Prisoners and Human Rights in Indonesia, wrote to the Foreign Office to ask for an arms embargo against Indonesia too. Mr Richard Powell, of the South-East Asia Department of the FO, wrote back that the 'important differences' were that the Falkland Islands were under 'British Administration' and were 'inhabited by people of predominantly British stock'. East Timor, he wrote, was 'quite different'.

Duncan Campbell

Cheap bus fares to be illegal

MANY BUS FARES could double next year if transport secretary David Howell gets his way. The new Transport Bill, which was published last week, gives Howell the power to set a maximum limit for the subsidy that each major city can provide for its ailing public transport. In the six English metropolitan counties Howell plans to cut £33 million from the total subsidy, which this year amounts to £249 million. And this figure does not take any account of inflation.

The result will be massive fares rises. The worst hit county will be South Yorkshire. Howell wants to cut their subsidy by £17 million. Yet even doubling the fares will only produce an extra £7 million. Merseyside will also be badly affected, losing £11 million in subsidy. Yet unlike South Yorkshire, Merseyside had a fairly low subsidy. The Merseyside cut can best be explained as Howell's spite. Merseyside cut its fares by 10 per cent last year, and got away with it when the High Court ruled that the reduction was legal.

London will get a slight increase in subsidy, following the increase in fares after its court defeat earlier this year. But the 25 per cent cut that the GLC wanted to make this April now seems more likely to be only 10 per cent.

The way the new law will work is that the government will set a maximum subsidy level for each conurbation. Any council which spends more can be challenged in the courts and councillors could be surcharged by the district auditor. If the Bill becomes law then it will end Labour's distinctive transport policy. The Labour parties in the GLC and the six metropolitan counties went into last year's local council elections promising lower fares. In effect, Labour will not now be allowed to offer this policy.

Yet as the results of a *New Statesman* survey show, bus fares in most major cities are not cheap, and London fares are the most expensive in the world. Howell aims to make sure they stay that way.

Mick Hamer

Bus fares for a three-mile journey

60p London
45p Southend, Lancaster, Halton
44p Burnley
43p Islwyn
42p Fylde
41p Blackpool, Rhymney Valley
40p Cardiff, Cleveland, Cynon Valley
38p Brighton, Taff-Ely, W. Yorkshire
37p Merthyr Tydfil
35p East Staffs, Glasgow, Southampton
34p Colchester, Warrington
33p Bournemouth, Hyndburn
32p Portsmouth
30p Blackburn, Derby, Greater Manchester, Great Yarmouth, Grimsby and Cleethorpes, Nottingham
28p Eastbourne, Thamesdown, Tyne and Wear
27p Preston
26p Chesterfield, Hartlepool, Ipswich, Merseyside
25p Leicester, Lincoln, Northampton, West Midlands
24p Chester
23p Reading
22p Newport
20p Darlington
8p South Yorkshire

Dudley goes critical

DUDLEY COUNCIL, criticised for low spending on education in a survey by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI), is about to impose a further round of cuts with the imminent completion of a report by management consultants Price Waterhouse. Their report, due in one or two weeks, was commissioned by the Tory-controlled authority to locate additional areas for savings.

The HMI survey of Dudley's education service – published last month but carried out 18 months ago – concluded that Dudley 'is now at the edge of what can be done within present levels of funding'. Since that survey was carried out, a further £1.78 million has been lopped off the education budget.

The survey also said there was 'no slack in the administrative arrangements'. But the Price Waterhouse team has been looking mainly at administration in the education department and in the schools. School-based options being considered include using fewer supply and peripatetic teachers, cutting technicians and ancillary staff in schools.

The most immediate threats from the Price Waterhouse exercise are further cuts in school allowances for books and equipment and a worsening in nursery provision. School allowances were cut earlier this year by £200,000 (20 per cent) plus a further £97,000 through abandoning an allowance for inflation. Then, the education committee decided against an even larger cut of 25 per cent by what a confidential committee memo called 'the danger of emotive publicity'.

The Dudley committee has also been considering the discontinuation of nursery education. Price Waterhouse is reviewing the authority's policy on provision. The most likely step will be a cut in the adult/child ratio in nursery provision from 1:20 to 1:30 in order 'to create significant savings'. This would be on top of this year's ratio cut from 1:15. The Department of Education and Science recommends a ratio of 1:13.

Rick Rogers

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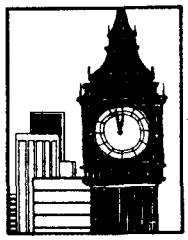

PETER KELLNER, Political Editor

PR: the wrong answer to the wrong questions

IT HAS NOT been a good year for advocates of electoral reform. Last winter both the argument and the votes seemed to be going their way. Not only was proportional representation widely seen as the best way of electing MPs; the Liberal/SDP Alliance seemed to have enough support to ensure the adoption of PR after the next general election.

How different things look today. It is no longer an odds-on bet that the Alliance will have the power to force through PR. Even if it nominally holds the balance of power in the next parliament, it may well have too few MPs to exert real leverage. Suppose the Alliance has 30 to 40 MPs; and suppose both the Labour and Tory leaderships remain implacably opposed to PR; but suppose, further, that something like a Speaker's Conference on electoral reform were offered by one of the main parties. The Alliance would, rightly, complain fiercely that this is a stalling tactic.

But what would it do then? For to reject the offer would be both to reject some hope, however remote, of achieving a measure of reform; it would also plunge Britain into a period of government paralysis, culminating in a fresh general election which might produce a result as messy as the one before. At a time when unemployment was 3½ million and rising, this prospect might not win overwhelming public approval.

It is not only the political arithmetic that is beginning to ebb away from PR. The argument is beginning to run against electoral reform, too. One by one, debating points used by the advocates of PR in principle have stumbled against the operation of PR in practice.

In early 1981, Roy Jenkins claimed that PR would provide for 'greater stability of national direction and policy'. Since then, two Irish general elections, held under the voting system the Alliance wants, have produced deadlocked results. The Republic is now thrust into its third general election in 18 months (see Mary Holland, page 14), with the likelihood of producing a third change of government. If there is anything that requires 'stability of direction', it is Anglo-Irish relations. In the last few months, Ireland's PR has not helped.

Irish politics have illustrated one of the potential weaknesses of PR: the excessive power it can give to small minorities. Advocates of PR tend to dismiss this point as more academic than real. For example, Enid Lakeman has recently written a book called *Power to Elect*, [1] advocating PR. As ever, Ms Lakeman marshals a great many interesting and useful facts about different countries. As a guide to voting systems round the world, her book is invaluable.

The same cannot, however, be said of the arguments she constructs from those facts. Dealing with the power-of-minorities point, she writes:

> [Critics of PR argue] that if no one party has more than half the seats, government is actually in the hands, not of a majority, but of a small party in a balancing position, able by bargaining with the larger parties to decide which of them takes office. *This, however, is generally put forward as a theory, seldom backed by concrete instances.* (emphasis added)

Poor Ms Lakeman. Four weeks after her book was published, West Germany provided just such a concrete instance, when the Free Democrats switched sides and put the Christian Democrats into office.

Then came the Spanish elections two weeks ago. Spain uses one of the main European PR systems which, advocates claim, should prevent governments being formed by parties that receive less than half the votes cast. Yet today the Socialists have a clear parliamentary majority, winning 57 per cent of the seats while receiving just 46 per cent of the votes. This 11 point 'distortion' is, if anything, slightly larger than the distortion that put Mrs Thatcher into Downing Street, even though the Tories received only 44 per cent of the UK vote in 1979.

ON THE OTHER side of the argument, of course, PR advocates can point to some of the oddities of Britain's present system. It is not simply that first-past-the-post discriminates against minorities, but that it discriminates against particular kinds of minority parties – those whose support is widely dispersed. In October 1974, the Liberals won more than five times as many votes as the Welsh and Scottish Nationalists, but got only 13 seats to the nationalists' 14.

Two publications, out this week, provide useful guides (alongside Ms Lakeman's) to this morass of number-swapping debating points. Thomas Mackie and Richard Rose of Strathclyde University have updated their volume of international election statistics[2], and claim to chart every competitive national election ever held (up to the end of last year) in 24 western nations.

Mackie and Rose show that PR election systems 'do not guarantee a better fit between a party's share of the popular vote and its seats in Parliament . . . Proportional representation is a matter of degree, not kind.' Those countries that have the best 'fit' are those with national lists (like Israel), or some system of 'topping up' local results according to a national formula (like Germany and Sweden). That system, however, is not the choice of the Liberal/SDP Alliance.

The second publication out this week on PR is by Peter Hain and Geoff Hodgson, and provides the fullest, most cogently argued case that I have seen from the Left against PR[3].

Messrs Hain and Hodgson recall how, historically, PR has been advocated for reasons more of expedience than principle. In the 1920s, before Labour became established as the main opposition party to the Tories, supporters of PR included Clement Attlee, Sydney Webb and Manny Shinwell.

However, what neither the advocates nor the critics of PR quite confront is the fact that there is no perfect electoral system. Elections perform various functions, and no one electoral system can perform each function to the full. In a non-presidential parliamentary system, the potential purposes of an election are: first, to choose a government; second, to reflect in Parliament the political allegiances of the electorate; third, to represent in Parliament the interests of different local communities.

Britain's first-past-the-post system is good at the first and third functions, but poor at the second. It puts a premium on effective government-formation, rather than fairness to small parties. Proportional representation, on the other hand, puts a premium on fairness, and sacrifices to some degree the government-formation and community functions.

The choice of electoral system, then, is not an absolute thing, but a matter of balancing the claims of competing functions on the electoral process. Indeed, there is no reason why one should not support different electoral systems for different purposes: first-past-the-post (or the Alternative Vote) for the House of Commons, Single Transferable Vote for the Northern Ireland Assembly, and this or some other variant of PR for European Parliament elections.

To enthusiasts on both sides of the argument, this will doubtless seem a cop-out. I would argue instead that it is a more principled position than that held by most partisans; for it is an attempt to face the core question that they tend to duck: what are elections for? □

1. Published by Heinemann, £6.95.
2. *The International Almanac of Electoral History*, 2nd edition, published by Macmillan, £25.
3. *Proportional Misrepresentation*, available from Spokesman Books, 45 Gamble Street, Nottingham NG7 4ET, £1 incl p&p.

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LABOUR PARTY

One month of the Right

Mr Mortimer's register as a device for expelling 'undesirables' came unstuck this week, but the Right still has at hand the means to expel and to change policy. Patrick Wintour reports

NEW LEFT REVIEW has not traditionally been the obvious place to look for authors writing on the Labour Party: Althusser, yes, Allaun, no has been the general rule. But in recent issues a fevered debate has been raging on the future of the Labour Party – much of it fought on the familiar terrain of the argument about whether 'socialists' should be in the Labour Party.

The most fervent advocate of joining has been Tariq Ali, a member – at the time of writing – of the Hornsey Labour Party. In an article written with Quintin Hoare earlier this year, Ali argued that the collapse of the two-party system, the imminence of proportional representation, the phenomenon of Bennism – all meant that the Labour Party must change. 'The politicisation taking place within the Labour Party cannot – as occurred with earlier divisions – be papered over by a simple formula of uniting to defeat the Tories. The Party itself is not the self-confident and powerful machine it was in the Fifties, adept as stifling class conflict and disciplining rebels.' If the Right attempted to 'purge' the Left, he argued, the constituencies would simply not tolerate it. 'The explosion of public sector unionism, the post-1968 radicalisation and the rise of the autonomous women's movement have combined to provide the party with a new layer of activists, very different from its old corporate base.' This base, Ali argued, 'cannot be conjured out of existence, even by the block vote . . . A continuation of the splitting process already under way seems vastly more probable than the Foot/Kinnock regime fudging all issues in order to restore the status quo ante'.

In fact within a very short period, exactly the opposite is happening in the Labour Party, largely because the Left is much weaker than Ali and Hoare assumed. The Right can now assert its authority over policy because it can now control the contents of the next manifesto and over organisation because it can put through expulsions from the party. Most importantly, it can do these things constitutionally.

The Left, by contrast, is confused and divided about its tactics. At last month's conference called by Hackney North Constituency Labour Party under the banner 'Labour against the Witch-hunt', the groups on the Left gathered to defend Militant and found themselves rebuffed by the Tendency. In the great traditions of the sectarian Left, there are as a result now two 'broad-based' Labour 'campaigns against the witch-hunt', each accusing the other of sectarianism. Thus in last week's *Socialist Challenge*, Alan Freeman, the publicity officer of 'Labour against the Witch-hunt' – the non-Militant group – wrote an article under the headline 'Militant sectarianism defeats itself'. In the same week's edition of *Militant* a report of the same conference denounced its sectarianism and commended Militant's own campaign, 'Labour Steering Committee against the Witch-hunts', as the only reliable campaign. A third, less quantifiable section of the Left feels deeply ambivalent about defending Militant.

These divisions will be exploited by the Right on the National Executive. The process of toning down party policy is already in hand. There is no constitutional way in which the Left can stop it. The Left has in the past believed that once policy was enshrined in the party's programme, it was 'safe'. Hence the unprecedentedly large number of card votes at this year's party conference, designed to ensure that particular policies received the necessary two-thirds majority to ensure them a place in the programme. This attempt at an insurance policy was based on a misunderstanding. For the programme is merely the source from which the manifesto drafters will draw their policy. Nothing else is guaranteed.

The party is now preparing to draw up a 'campaign document' as a precursor to the manifesto. This will impose priorities and time-scales on the general aspirations and policies contained in *Programme 1982*. The Right could well use this drafting process, within the next two months, to weed out radical policies not to its liking.

The body drawing up this document is the Policy Co-ordinating Committee: it consists of ten members from the National Executive and ten from the shadow cabinet. The NEC representatives will be party officers and chairmen of the NEC sub-committees. As a result of the votes for the NEC chairmanships this week, right-wingers such as John Golding, Denis Howell and Russell Tuck of the railwaymen's union will represent the NEC. The shadow cabinet, currently being elected by the Parliamentary Labour Party, is also certain to send a 'rightish' delegation.

The draft of the Campaign Document, as agreed by the Policy Co-ordinating Committee, will in due course be placed before a full meeting of the NEC and shadow cabinet. Senior Labour officers, aware of the possibility of a spring election and anxious to avoid a last minute row over the manifesto, are arguing that the joint shadow cabinet-NEC meeting should take place in 'January or very early February'. The Campaign Document would, in turn, form the basis of the manifesto; which would also be agreed at a joint NEC-Shadow meeting. At all these meetings the Right will have big majorities.

It was, in any case, a delusion of the Left that a complete Bennite policy package was already enshrined in *Programme 1982*. There are, in fact, significant gaps. In a paper submitted this week to John Golding's Home Policy Committee, Labour's research department lists the many holes that need to be filled in during 1983: trade ('apart from a few paragraphs here and there, the party has published nothing substantial on trade'); local government finance ('a statement of policy is needed here'); land ('we have no clear position on policy towards urban land, despite the critical importance of the issue'); housing finance ('apart from our commitment to a one year rent freeze and some minor changes in taxation, the party has no agreed position'); local government reform ('despite our denunciations of the Tory local government structure, there is still no clear consensus on what should replace it'); media ('we have been able only to sketch out the main principles of reform'). The paper also says further work is needed on the security services, the environment and women's rights.

Equally the TUC-Labour Party Liaison committee still has a good deal of policy work to do. It plans to discuss key issues over the next six months – low pay, defence spending and jobs as well as planning and industrial democracy. A paper to this week's Home Policy committee of the NEC from the research department hinted: 'It is almost certain that further consideration will need to be given to the National Economic Assessment (NEA); and to the general approach to dealing with inflation'. Thus further discussion of an incomes policy – perhaps in the context of a statutory minimum wage – is likely to be on the agenda for the next few months.

A VIEW FREQUENTLY repeated on the Left is that the defence of Militant is really a defence of Left policy within the Labour Party. Formally, this view is odd, since Militant does not agree with *Programme 1982*: its latest theoretical review is devoted to a long attack upon it. There is also the view that the expulsion of Militant from the Labour Party will represent a symbolic defeat for the Left and a signal to the Right that they have the left-wing constituency parties on the run. As one jaundiced left-winger put it: 'John Golding's idea of a mass party is John Golding and a hall of mirrors'.

At present, most right-wingers are surprisingly ignorant of how the Left is made up. For instance, one leading right-winger

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on the National Executive, to whom I spoke this week, believed that the Socialist Workers' Party was in the Labour Party. It implies that the Right, having trodden on Militant, may be pretty random in choosing subsequent targets. The decision of John Spellar's constituency party, for instance, to seek the expulsion of a *Tribune* journalist, Nigel Williamson, for writing an article critical of Spellar during his Northfield by-election, not surprisingly fosters the belief that the purge will turn into a massacre of the innocents.

Militant activists, nevertheless, are a particularly awkward set of martyrs to defend. In the past Militant has always kept its distance from the rest of the Left and refused to commit itself to campaigns which it did not control. This separatism has led to problems in the current 'anti-purge' campaign. Initially, Left opposition centred on resistance to the register. The Left sported 'I'm an unregistered socialist' badges and groups of varying obscurity vied with each other in their determination not to register – on the principle that the register was undemocratic. Militant then calmly announced after party conference that it was considering registering. The Left had to shift its ground mainly to fighting expulsions.

At its 30 October conference attended by delegates from 100 constituency parties (half from London), 'Labour against the Witch-hunt' passed a motion calling on constituency parties to resist expulsions, even if this meant being closed down by the NEC. (A separate proposal that a network of expelled constituencies should be set up was defeated.)

One of the 'front-line' constituencies, Islington Central, has already voted to go to the lengths of being closed down if necessary. Islington contains within its ranks two of the leading Militants, Ted Grant and Peter Taafe, respectively the group's theoretician and the paper's editor. The motion to fight the expulsions was passed by Islington's General Committee by a two-thirds majority. How quickly this majority will continue when faced by the reality of expulsions remains to be seen. It is possible that the NEC would decide to expel all those on the General Committee who continued to vote against expulsions – a tactic used by the National Executive during the 1950s.

But Militant seems to be rejecting even this help from the rest of the Left. Leading Militants, such as Bob Labi, have been arguing since July that constituencies should not fight expulsions to the point of being closed down. That line was put by Militant at the 'Labour against the Witch-hunt' meeting (it was considering taking legal action against the party – this would not involve constituencies being shut down).

Militant is rigid in its refusal to air its internal differences in public. But it may be that Militant is prepared to let its leadership lose their party cards if Militant's basic membership strength is kept intact. That strength is significant. At the last Labour conference 84,000 votes were cast for Roy Farrar as the constituency representative on the conference arrangements committee: Farrar is a Militant supporter and entirely unknown outside the Militant. This would suggest around 80 of the delegates to party conference were Militant supporters.

Militant claims that it is gaining recruits from all the recent publicity about it, so it has no wish to upset this new support by allowing itself to be portrayed as 'splitters'. It thinks that the 'correctness' of its ideas will inevitably bring the Labour movement to its side. The adventurism of other Trotskyist groups, by contrast, it finds repulsive.

If Militant does adopt such a position it would be a relief to most of the Left – desperate to move on from internal power-struggles. A section of the Left is deeply pessimistic about the Left's actual support among the electorate (ie they believe the opinion polls). A group connected with the Labour Co-ordinating Committee have been arguing for some time that it is not just a question of altering the balance of conference voting in favour of the constituencies and against the union block vote. Nor is it just a question of winning more activists. They argue that as long as the Right is able to appeal over the heads of party activists for at least the tacit support of many Labour voters and trade unionists, it will always have the power to roll back the gains made by the Left. That the Left is coming to recognise its weakness was underlined by the decision of some Left MPs in October to abandon their plans to split the Tribune Group.

As Geoff Bish, the head of Labour's research department, advised the Home Policy Committee of the National Executive this week:

> We must acknowledge time is not on our side. At best, we have about nine months in which to achieve a sustained shift of opinion within the electorate. Every party meeting – especially at constituency level – must become as much concerned with how to win support for Labour's Programme as to how to amend and improve it . . . we can no longer afford the dissonance of party spokesman (not) agreeing a common platform: the luxury of having major speeches on the economy being drowned by others, by equally senior spokesman, on the threat of Militant, on the need to fight against witch-hunts or whatever. Unless our spokesmen are able to work together to get across the major themes of the campaign, much of our efforts will be in vain.

These kinds of arguments are being put by the Mortimer/Foot axis in an attempt to restrain the Right's more revengeful instincts. The Right had a 15-14 majority at the first meeting of the new NEC two weeks ago. But within that majority there are some representatives from the unions, notably Neville Hough of the General and Municipal and Sid Tierney of the shopworkers' union, who might not be expected to vote with the 'hard right' all the time. We may be hearing more of Mr Hough and Mr Tierney as the year progresses. □

The unaffiliated Left

Campaign for Labour Party Democracy – Membership 1,200 individuals and 400 organisations. Has always specialised in pushing through motions at party conference and prided itself on understanding the mechanics of conference. Currently divided

CAMPAIGN
for labour party democracy
BULLETIN No 3

over the 'register' issue. Its latest mailing to members will contain three articles in favour of registering (from Derer and Willsman, John Chapman and Victor Schonfield) and three against (John Bloxam, Nigel Williamson and Jon Lansman).

Labour Co-ordinating Committee – Has specialised in more reflective strategies for

LABOUR
CO-ORDINATING
COMMITTEE

building a mass party. Its Executive is recommending to its annual conference in Newcastle that LCC should 'register'. However, it is opposed to any expulsions.

Socialist Organiser – Far less sectarian than its Trotskyist counterpart Militant. Willing to be active among the Left pressure groups. Tends towards a simple view of the electorate's enthusiasm for socialism. Anti-register, anti-expulsions.

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WELFARE STATE

Springing the trap

Frank Field proposes changes in the system of tax and benefits

WHAT THE SDP claims in its proposals on poverty out this week* as the biggest reform of the welfare state since Beveridge amounts to little more than an introduction of a new means-tested grant. The existing structure of 40 or so means-tested benefits will remain in place. Their aim is that their new benefit would so raise the income of the poor that the vast majority would become ineligible for help from these sources. The scheme would, therefore, help simplify the welfare state. Once implemented, the poor would only have to make only one application for help.

This simplification is both an advantage and a disadvantage. It will mean that life is easier for those who, at present, have to trek from office to office claiming a whole range of help. Ease of access may well, therefore, increase the numbers claiming help. At the moment, for example, only 1 in 2 of those entitled to claim family income supplement (FIS) do so. But the more who claim the new unified benefit, the greater will be the numbers subjected to the poverty trap.

The SDP asserts that its new scheme will abolish the 'poverty trap', the term which describes the 100 per cent or more loss of overall income suffered by low wage earners who manage to increase their gross earnings. But the scheme will do so only in a very technical sense, namely, that the combination of tax and National Insurance payments, taken together with the loss of means-tested help, would reduce the income of many of the working poor by fractionally less than 100 per cent of the extra income earned.

However, in two ways the new scheme will make this 'incentive' aspect worse. One defence regularly trotted out against the poverty trap argument is the assertion that, because large numbers of poor do not claim all the help offered, the trap is more a theoretical than practical reality.

Claims are made for different means tests over different time spans. Consequently, a rise in earnings does not affect a person's FIS eligibility until the end of a current claim, which runs for 12 months. Housing rebates, on the other hand, can be reduced immediately.

So the authorities assure doubting enquirers that either the poor don't claim means-tested help or, if they do, the effect of staggered application dates means that many of the poor do not suffer *in practice* 100 per cent tax rate on income increases.

Now consider what the new situation will be after implementing the SDP's plan. The vast majority of the eligible poor who claim will be drawing a single benefit, and any change in eligibility will be implemented on a set date. This, together with the loss from increased tax and National Insurance, will mean that the poor will be caught in what is likely to be an even more efficient pincer movement on their net incomes.

Serious as this is, the SDP has a further nasty surprise in store for poor families. To pay for the new benefit, the SDP proposes scrapping the married man's tax allowance. Yet this move would massively reduce the tax threshold and so bring even more poor families into tax, and thereby potentially into the poverty trap. Ironically, it is the very people who the SDP most wants to help who look likely to be most damaged by the proposed reform.

Where the SDP is wholly correct, however, is in its assertion that the politics of 'no economic growth' are essentially about redistributing existing resources. But any redistribution worth its salt must take account of practically the whole of the tax benefit welfare state – not just the married man's tax allowance.

This year, less than 50 per cent of personal income in the UK will be taxed. The reason for this surprising fact is the growth of the tax benefits within the welfare state. As the system has become more generous, by exempting an ever-growing amount of income from tax, the paradoxical result has been that, for a given level of total revenue to the Exchequer, income tax has been levied at lower and lower levels of real income; and, at the same time, at higher effective marginal rates per extra pound earned at the bottom of the scale.

THREE REFORMS are essential, if the whole tax system is to be restructed on more progressive lines:

- First, all tax benefits should only be allowed at the standard rate of tax. At the moment, tax benefits can be offset against the taxpayer's marginal rate of tax. They are therefore of greatest value to highest income groups.
- Secondly, a total cash ceiling must be put on all tax benefits other than the personal allowances. (The main personal allowances are the single person's, the married couple's and the wife's earned income relief.) For example, about £2 billion is allowed in mortgage interest relief each year. It would be politically impossible to wipe out this benefit overnight, but a cash ceiling could be applied at the current level and this sum shared out over the growing number of owner-occupiers in succeeding years.

Had this reform been implemented in 1975, the additional revenue from applying a cash ceiling policy to just four tax benefits – mortgage interest relief, pension schemes, life assurance premiums and retirement annuity relief for the self-employed – would have amounted to £3.8 billion over a five-year period and, in the last year alone, the Exchequer would have collected an additional £1.8 billion. This fact shows just how fast under present policies the expenditure on tax benefits is growing.

- Thirdly, taxpayers must be persuaded to spread more effectively the income earned from up to 40 years' work over the two vulnerable periods of most people's lives – when they have children and when they retire: and there must be a redistribution of income from men to women. This reform centres on the married man's tax allowance, although Labour's reason for reforming this allowance should be different from the SDP's. Their aim is to use the extra revenue to attack poverty. While this objective is also a crucial one for socialists, the method of financing an anti-poverty programme is equally important. The aim should not be to put at a further disadvantage another group who should also receive support, namely, families with children.

The Labour movement must, therefore, be interested in both a vertical redistribution – from rich to poor – and a horizontal shift of income from the childless to those with children.

Married women at present gain a tax benefit through the working lives of their husbands. That tax benefit goes to their husbands. Some groups like the SDP advocate the abolition of the married man's tax allowance but this would present real difficulties.

It would be politically possible, however, to apply a cash ceiling to the total cost of the married man's tax allowance and for the money thus saved to be channelled to households with children under 5. If such a cash ceiling approach had been applied to the married man's tax allowance in 1975/76, then by 1981 the cash payment for households with children under 5 would have stood at £10.50 a week. A reform along these lines would initiate a steady redistribution of income from men to women and at the same time begin the process of matching people's income to their lifetime's needs.

The child benefit scheme is also a key to remodelling the welfare state so that it acts as a floor on which people can build by their own efforts. The larger the injection of funds into this scheme the greater will be the decrease in the numbers of poor families – i.e. the more effective the welfare state will become.

Child benefit also has the advantages of transferring income from men to women; and it increases the range of choices, and thereby the freedom, enjoyed by families. The importance of child benefit in helping to determine the type of society in Britain is difficult to overestimate.

Socialists have important lessons to learn from the SDP's proposals. We now have a serious challenger for the poor's votes and, if it officially adopts this policy, the SDP will show that it is prepared to make quite major structural changes to the tax system so as to finance an anti-poverty programme. We would be foolish to think that those poor people who do vote will continue putting their crosses against Labour candidates because, to use a favourite phrase of the Prime Minister, 'there is no alternative'. □

*'Attacking poverty' Green Paper No. 11. £1 incl. postage. SDP, 4 Cowley St., London SW1.

Frank Field is the Labour MP for Liverpool Birkenhead.

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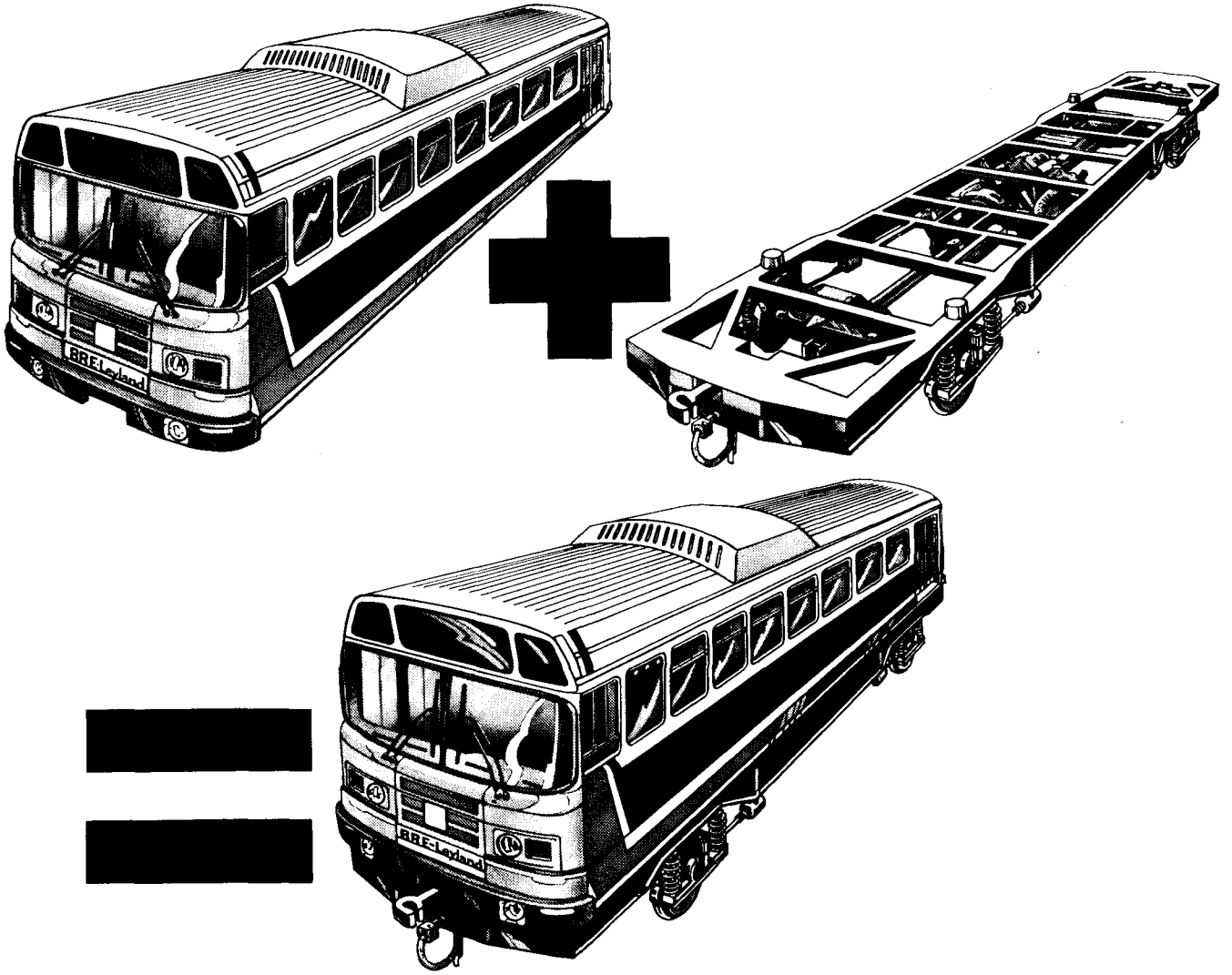

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LABOUR'S PROGRAMME

Is crime here to stay?

Ian Taylor considers the Labour Party's attitude to law, order and the police

WHAT SHOULD THE LABOUR Party be aiming for, as it rethinks its policies on 'law and order' for the 1980s? It should certainly not be doing what it did in 1979. Faced with a raucous Tory attack on Labour's allegedly permissive approach to crime, its spokesmen either collapsed into nostalgic references to the halcyon days of the working-class family (Mr Callaghan), or else merely expressed a sense of powerlessness and resignation.

A telling and typical moment occurred during BBC-1 *Tonight*'s special programme on law and order on 20 April 1979. A two-minute introduction framed the programme verbally, with references to the 'continuing increases' in crimes of violence and to the police being 8,000 under strength. Visual images flashed across the screen of the police under attack at some recent demonstration, of the Police Federation's election letter on law and order, and of Margaret Thatcher indicting Labour for its failure to underwrite social order. After this powerful introduction, the presenter, David Dimbleby, swivelled authoritatively in his chair to face his monitor, indicating that the Home Secretary, Mr Merlyn Rees, 'is in Leeds tonight'. He then immediately demanded.

> Mr Rees, do you as Home Secretary accept any responsibility for the steep rise in the crime rate over the last four years?

It is not surprising that Merlyn Rees's replies were halting and defensive, though what he actually said was quite consistent with official party policies as described in the party's handbook on *Law, Order and Human Rights*.

On the evening of Mrs Thatcher's victory, on 3 May, ITN's *The Nation Decides* carried a caption which declared that 23 per cent of the voters who had switched to the Tories had switched on 'law and order'. More recent opinion polls indicate a continuing high level of support for Tory policies on law and order.

We do not have to accept Thatcher's demand for a return to discipline and 'law' in order to take popular anxieties about crime and social order seriously. Britain's economic and social crises are obviously *not* a product of the high crime rates of recent years; any more than they are a product of the level of strike activity: both these 'rates' are *expressions* of the failure of the limited form of Keynesianism which has passed for social democracy in the post-war period. The harms and losses that are involved in crime should be clearly and consistently identified by socialists as arising out of *that* fundamental economic failure. The logic of the opinion poll data on popular attitudes, however, is that working people as a whole cannot – and do not – accept that the decline in their environment and in interpersonal relations should be an inevitable consequence of the crisis of the British economy. So when they hear the Labour Party speaking of crime as an inevitable phenomenon – to which they must more or less adjust – they *are* drawn to the rhetorics of the Right, which do at least identify the possibility of *reordering* social relations (through a combination of penal discipline and a reimposed national morality).

Some Labour politicians have begun to understand this. *Labour's Programme 1982*, indeed, begins its section on crime and human rights with a recognition of the popular anxiety about crime: it is probably the first Labour Party statement since the war to do so. But has the rethinking that has gone on in inner party circles generated any new programme likely to be persuasive at a popular level?

THERE SEEM TO BE at least four essential elements to a popular and socialist criminal policy. First, it ought to anticipate a future set of social relations involving less interpersonal conflict, anxiety and squalor than has been experienced by the mass of working people under conventional social-democratic governments and under Thatcherism. Particular attention must be given to the inner cities and to the more decrepit housing estates, but a generalised attack is also required on the other sources of racial and interpersonal violence, meanness and despair at all levels of society. A socialist criminal policy must therefore assume the pursuit by Government of economic and social policies authentically constructed in the universal interest and not merely the interests of Capital. The causes of riots and street crime are not economic in some simple deterministic sense. But neither are they a simple matter of individual morality, as Margaret Thatcher would have us believe.

Secondly, a socialist policy must work with a clear conception of crime. Such a conception must recognise the real harms and injuries that *are* involved in many of the behaviours counted by the criminal statistics. It must be especially sensitive to the fact that crimes of violence and theft are disproportionately experienced by working class people. Clearly, many of the 2,964,000 offences known to the police in 1980 *were* a product of increases in the number of police officers employed over previous years, increases in people's willingness to report offences, and a variety of other ambiguous factors. But the 97,200 offences of violence against the person recorded in the same year must still be recognised as being a measure of a *real decline* in social relations during the post-war period, for the comparable figure for 1945 was 4,162 such offences.

Taking crime seriously does not mean going overboard for a conservative theory of all crime as undisciplined and 'lawless' behaviour: only a proportion of the behaviours which are currently censored as 'criminal' are seriously harmful to working-class and popular interests: and (as Hermann Mannheim, the long-forgotten social democratic criminologist, well understood) by no means all the behaviours which *are* harmful to the working class (from failure to provide safety at work to the export of capital from the country of its production) are seen as 'criminal' by the law. We cannot uncritically accept the conventional 'state' definition of crime. We have to retrieve Mannheim's earlier conception of crime as involving both social *and* economic offences *against the common interest*, committed by the advantaged and disadvantaged alike and requiring an equal level of attention by the public and by

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a socially-responsive police force.

For such a 'social democratic conception of crime' to re-emerge, there must be a parallel opening-out of the police, the courts, the legal systems to greatly increased scrutiny. Such reform is essential for two main reasons.

First, the undemocratic and non-accountable forms of policing which have been in evidence in London, Merseyside, Manchester and elsewhere are throwing the police as an institution into disrespect. But it is not only that policing requires 'consent' in some abstract sense. Socialist policy must now further demand forms of policing that are responsive to *very different* demands and social interests.

Secondly, it is apparent that the courts, police and penal institutions – taken as a whole – are even further removed, in their hierarchical and essentially mysterious procedures, from popular needs and understanding than the much maligned bureaucracies of the Welfare State. Countless research studies reveal that the clients of legal and penal institutions have little understanding of the processes to which they have been subjected (and often quite high levels of resentment). A socialist penal policy must involve a radical popularisation of the procedures and rituals of the courts; and a significant broadening of the social base of the legal profession, the judiciary, the magistracy and the higher echelons of the police and prison service.

In any case, there is a growing realisation that, in their undemocratic forms, these institutions simply do not work, with the overcrowded and archaic prison system clearly falling apart. By the same token, for all their arrays of computers and other surveillance technologies, the police are clearly not any better at their essential function: crime detection and control. Clear-up rates have not improved significantly, despite the recent increases in police manpower and salaries; and the case of the Yorkshire Ripper has left a popular impression (which is in no way contradicted by reading professional police journals) that the police force has forgotten *how* to detect.

A SOCIALIST CRIME policy must also involve the attempt to come to terms with popular demands for 'justice' (or *punishment*). This is difficult territory, but it cannot merely be circumvented. Victims of crime and residents of troubled neighbourhoods must have the right and opportunity to pursue their case within a democratic legal system. The results of such 'trials' should certainly involve proper financial compensation for the victims, where this is sensible, but they should also involve, in some way or other, the moral denunciation of those who have offended against the 'common interest'. This would be a legitimate way of defining the 'authority of law' in a society that is routinely flawed, for example, by violent displays of sexism and racism. It is nonsense for socialists in 1982 to address these kinds of social injuries either through the conventional rhetorics of professional liberals (stressing always 'the rehabilitation of the offender') or via an *a priori* civil libertarian insistence on the 'rights' of the offender. There are differences on these issues, but what *is* clear is that the conventional avoidance of the subject of punishment, guilt and compensation by the Left cannot be sustained. We can, however, be sure that the 'democratisation' of the courts and the legal profession would produce a considerable reduction in the severity with which the vast bulk of petty property offences are currently viewed and a consequent rapid reduction in the use of imprisonment, where the prison population is now four times its level in the 1940s.

HOW FAR DOES Labour's new programme move along these lines? On the interdependence of economic policy and crime, it declares:

> Bad housing, mass unemployment especially amongst the young and the break-up of communities by bad urban planning, have all contributed to the high levels of vandalism, burglary, assault and robbery in some areas.

So the party's position appears to be that housing and urban planning have been 'mismanaged'. (Mass unemployment, though discussed elsewhere, does not reappear in the discussion of crime.) It goes on to argue that more money should be spent redesigning inner-city areas and unpopular housing estates *in order to make them more secure from crime*.

But the fundamental change that is being implicitly recommended in the programme itself seems to be towards adoption of an essentially 'realist' and conservative position. Crime, like mass unemployment, *is here to stay* (it remains indeed, like the weather, 'significantly beyond the control of governments'), but in the meantime the Party commits itself to provide the finance for the crime-prevention technology with which to withstand the siege. It also hints at a programme of reparation to victims by offenders, not so much as a part of a clear programme of 'democratising punishment', but rather as a means of adjusting society's implicitly over-zealous attitude to crime. (There seems to be an acknowledgement here that Labour has in fact no economic policy which can rescue working people from their present dislocation.)

The conception of crime itself in *Labour's Programme 1982* is equally conventional. It focuses on 'violent crime – murder, rape, robbery and assault' (on the grounds that these have 'a direct impact on the victim'). The programme makes *no* move towards the articulation of a 'popular' or a 'class' conception of anti-social crime *as a whole*. We are expected to speak (like old-fashioned pre-Thatcherite Conservatives) 'realistically' of the harms done to individuals by other individuals, qualified only by an acceptance that the causes of individual maladjustment lie in the mismanagement of the urban environment. It is difficult to see how Labour's 'new' realism (although an improvement on the scepticism and resignation of 1979) could be the basis for a popular or class conception of crime, capable of penetrating the law and order rhetoric of Thatcherism.

The *Programme*'s remarks on the police, however, are not conservative. The police forces, especially in London, are indicted for their persistent racial abuse and their failure to defend women and 'the enthnic minority community' from violence. They are 'out of touch', 'badly trained', 'unaccountable'. The Party is, therefore, committed to the establishment of an independent public prosecutor (in effect, to evaluate all charges brought by the police), to the codification and restriction of police powers of search and seizure, arrest, detection and interrogation. The Party would also:

> Create elected police authorities with statutory responsibility for the determination of police policy within their areas.

This would include responsibility for the appointment of senior police officers. The complaints procedure put in place by the 1976 Police Act would be replaced by a procedure that is 'genuinely accountable to local interests', the Special Patrol Groups would be disbanded and some sort of ban on the use of CS gas and plastic bullets is proposed. Police officers found guilty of racialist behaviour would be subject to internal discipline.

But some qualifications have to be made about this apparently forceful radicalism towards the police. While the Party supports the idea of community police councils (bodies at local level within which informal discussion of police policy can take place) as an addition to the formal local authority police committees, the idea of such councils is currently opposed by the GLC Police Committee, on the grounds that they would have no real power and no clear line of accountability to the public. They are seen, probably correctly, as a smokescreen.

It is unfortunate, too, that the discussion of policing in *Labour's Programme 1982*, is so exclusively critical. Little attempt is made to spell out positively the outlines of an acceptable form of policing that *would* meet the specific demands now being made on the police by different sections of British society. Critical though we should be of the police activity in relation to many strikes (Grunwick), in anti-Nazi mobilisations (Southall) and indeed in their everyday conduct (deaths in police custody), we should also recognise and emphasise the role of the police in the arbitration of local disputes (eg in working-class neighbourhoods and elsewhere), in the surveillance and curtailment of the British Movement and the smaller para-military organisations of the far Right and in the routine policing of our inner cities. It is no part of a socialist perspective on crime to withdraw police from such duties.

After reading *Labour's Programme*, however, we are left with the impression that the Party thinks the definition of proper police work in the 1980s ought to remain a responsibility of the police themselves; or else, much worse, that the Party has no constructive view of the police as peacekeepers, crime fighters or social service agencies in the 1980s. It would be unfortunate if the discussion of police were merely an extension of the Party's longstanding (and understandable) distrust of the police, or of the crude conspiracy theory that 'policing' is by

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definition only a part of the repressive aspects of a capitalist state.

Significantly, nothing like so radical and detailed a set of commitments has emerged in respect of the other institutions of the legal and penal system. Prisons are certainly seen (again for the first time) as having clearly failed in the business of rehabilitation; and conditions for prison officers and inmates are admitted to be 'unduly restrictive, insanitary and unhealthy'. But no clear solution is proposed to these problems, except for a review of the 1952 Prison Act and some unspecified revision of the character and role of the prison Boards of Visitors. We may expect a continuation of the pressure, hitherto completely without success, to force a change in the sentencing policies of judges and magistrates.

But there is not a word in *Labour's Programme* on the reform of that fundamental bastion of class and privilege, the legal profession and the Bench. Youth workers (and no doubt many young people as well) will be dismayed that there is no commitment to any action by a Labour government on the question of the 'juvenile justice system'. There is no critical discussion of the way in which the 'caring' visions of the 1969 Childrens and Young Persons Act has been replaced by a twin strategy of surveillance (Intermediate Treatment) and physical and moral discipline (Detention Centres) for the control of working-class youth.

So the radicalism of *Labour's Programme 1982* on law and order is partial. It is targeted almost exclusively on the police. But, with the police, it has already adopted a one-sided, negative and perilous position, not positively clarifying what it *does* want of police forces in the future. Any Labour government will come to power in very difficult economic and political circumstances. If it intends to implement a socialist programme, it will require the co-operation and not the enmity of the policy. □

Ian Taylor is now in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Carleton University in Ottawa. He is the author of Law and Order: Arguments for Socialism *(Macmillan, 1981).*

THIS ENGLAND

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□ Mr John Cheeseman, the South-western stipendiary magistrate, replied: 'If you want to raise political points do it in the streets. You behave yourself like an adult in here.' – *Guardian* (B. King)

□ Sir Maxwell, who died in September, aged 72, started his Cape of Good Hope collection in 1960. Friends say he lost interest in it and decided to sell it because he had nothing left to collect and the Queen would not swap with him. – *Daily Telegraph* (G. M. Moger)

□ Special 'rest and recovery' weekend breaks were yesterday offered by the Hotel Norwich in Norwich to help people get over the traumatic experience of moving house. Guests will be given a 'frustration pack' containing aspirins, tea bags and a telephone number of the local Samaritan branch. – *Daily Telegraph* (G. M. Moger)

IRELAND

Abortion in the rain

Mary Holland on the latest Irish election

IRELAND'S THIRD general election campaign in 15 months has got off to a thoroughly depressing start. It isn't just the driving rain which soaks the candidates as they stand outside church gates to address the crowds leaving Sunday mass, nor the sense of *déjà vu* at the prospect of the endless press conferences in plushy Dublin hotels.

Much more it is the general feeling that this latest trip to the polls at the end of November is not going to make one bit of difference to the major problems which now face the Republic – inflation running at 17 per cent, the highest unemployment rate in the EEC, Anglo-Irish relations at an all time low and continuing violence in the North.

The minority Fianna Fail government fell because it tried, rather belatedly, to introduce a stringent economic package, including drastic cuts in health and education spending. The independent deputies of the left-wing Workers Party, who have previously supported Mr Haughey, wouldn't wear them and voted against him in a confidence motion. This was an almost exact re-run of the situation earlier this year, when Dr Garret Fitzgerald's coalition government was defeated by independent deputies when it tried the same kind of budget.

Mr Haughey's Fianna Fail party differs from Dr Fitzgerald's Fine Gael on a number of important issues, notably the North. But it is the style of the two men that is in stark contrast. Mr Haughey is perceived as a fixer and a consummate political survivor, while Dr Fitzgerald is the Mr Clean of Irish politics, a talkative academic with some liberal leanings – a bit naive for the grubby world of politics. When the economy was booming, marginal differences were enough for the two parties, rooted as they are in the civil war politics of 60 years ago. But Ireland today is flat broke and what has become clear is that neither party has an adequate strategy for dealing with the country's economic malaise. At times both Mr Haughey and Dr Fitzgerald sound like Mrs Thatcher scolding the electorate for its spendthrift ways, but they both lack the British premier's convictions when she talks in this way, because there is no tradition here of political parties based on class differences.

This was dramatically illustrated just before the fall of Haughey's government, when the leader of the Labour Party, Michael O'Leary, suddenly resigned not just from the leadership, but from the party itself. A few days later he was warmly welcomed into Fine Gael by Dr Fitzgerald. It has now been confirmed that he will stand as a candidate for his new party in the election. His successor as Labour's leader is Dick Spring, a 32-year old barrister and former rugby international who has been in parliament all of 15 months.

What most people in Ireland want now is a period of stable government which would give someone, anyone, the chance to get to grips with the economy. In theory, this should give the edge to Fianna Fail, which has traditionally been the only party capable of getting an overall majority in the Dail. But Fianna Fail is publicly split on the issue of Mr Haughey's controversial leadership. Only last month 22 of his deputies voted 'no confidence' in him.

Dr Fitzgerald has been doing his best to convince the voters that Fine Gael can win enough seats to form a government on its own, but the figures just don't add up for him. Due to Ireland's PR voting system, Fine Gael must be sure of large numbers of 'transfers' from Labour voters to get its extra seats. This is less likely in this election because of the extreme bitterness among Labour supporters at what they see as their erstwhile leader's defection and Dr Fitzgerald's enthusiastic endorsement of it. This, too, is likely to make a coalition between Fine Gael and Labour more difficult.

It is no secret that the British government, in particular Mr James Prior, would like to see Dr Fitzgerald back in power. Not only would Anglio-Irish relations improve with Mr Haughey out of the way but, it is hoped, Dr Fitzgerald might persuade John Hume to take his Social Democratic and Labour Party into the new Northern Irish Assembly. This could be over-optimistic. Dr Fitzgerald was the first Irish politician to pronounce Mr Prior's plans for 'rolling devolution' as 'unacceptable' to any Irish government. If he is elected, he will also be faced with the problems that he cannot be seen to put pressure on the SDLP at the behest of the British government, particularly when the party has lost support in the recent Northern election to Provisional Sinn Fein. Dr Fitzgerald blames the British for Sinn Fein's recent electoral successes.

As usual in Irish politics, the election air is thick with smear and counter-smear. This time the 'smearing' issue is abortion. Mr Haughey, by pulling one of those 'strokes' which leave both his friends and enemies gasping, managed to publish the text of the long awaited constitutional amendment, guaranteeing the right to life of the unborn child, just two days before his government fell. He has already promised to hold a referendum on the issue before Christmas and has warned the voters that they should not trust Dr Fitzgerald on the subject. Fine Gael, he claims, is ambivalent about the anti-abortion amendment; and a number of Labour Party deputies are known to be positively against it. Dr Fitzgerald has responded promptly by promising that Fine Gael will hold the referendum, by next March at the latest.

Abortion is the one issue on which no politician in the major parties dares be seen to be 'soft'. Already illegal under Ireland's existing laws, it must be made doubly so by writing a ban on it into the constitution. □

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Amrit Wilson on race

You think *we* have problems...

A black woman charged with assaulting a police officer last month described how she had been sexually assaulted in a police van. An officer, she said, had torn open her dress and jabbed her breasts with a truncheon. Mrs Esme Baker told Waltham Forest Magistrates' Court that PC Anthony Wright had said to the two other police officers in the van: 'Look, then, I didn't know a nigger woman had breasts.' Wright denied this but the magistrates cleared Mrs Baker.

Not all black people experience such violent racism – but all know it is a common occurrence and all live under its threat. This fear reinforces everyday racism, repeated in all our dealings with the establishment. From that experience there has come an endless list of indictments of which Mrs Baker's is only one. What has been the state's response, particularly to the charge of violence by its own employees? It has been to side-step the issue of racism altogether and sponsor instead studies into the peculiar habits of black people.

One of these is the new Community Relations course at Hendon police college to teach recruits about the 'customs', 'religious beliefs' and 'lifestyles' of the black communities. They are to be told, for example, that Afro-Caribbeans born here do not have the same 'mechanisms for coping' as their parents, or that, unlike Britons who value independence, Asians value dependence . . .

The course is the end product of Scarman's post-Brixton recommendation that the police be 'sensitised to the public'. From the curriculum this appears to mean that the police must learn a little about the habits and habitat of black people in order that their authority will be accepted. The meaning of Scarman's recommendation is finally clarified; it was never a criticism of the police at all, but merely a suggestion that they acknowledge that black people are a part of the public. Now that 'multi-cultural' material has been added to the syllabus the matter of police/black relations is closed.

But the syllabus material itself is racist: racist in concept because it treats black people as being outside 'normal' society, as an object for study; it ignores racism itself, which is the overwhelming black experience, whether you are born in Bangladesh or Birmingham; it is racist in content because what is selected about traditional culture is itself prejudiced and often incorrect; and, more than anything else, racist in its deadpan tone which assumes that black people are entirely defined by what is presented as their irrelevant culture (while white people are human beings who can transcend theirs).

In the *Asians in Britain* 'pack' prepared for the course, the intricacies of the Indian caste system and theories of reincarnation are described; but nothing is said about Asian people's experience of racial attack, or of their feelings about the lack of police protection. The *West Indian Profile* 'pack' reveals that 'Food is one of the pleasures which West Indians in common with others enjoy . . . many will eat the food available in shops here.' However, 'Rastafarians', the recruit is told, 'do not eat pork, salt, certain vegetables and fats. This of course has implications for the staff in institutions where there are Rastafarians.' What institutions? The pack is too coy to refer to prisons, or ask why there are so many black prisoners in such British institutions in the first place.

This kind of racism might seem subtle. But multi-culturalism for the police is part of a much larger multi-cultural programme, which is now serving an insidious function – that of first ignoring and finally reinforcing racism.

HOW DID it all start? The seeds were nurtured by the confusion of the liberal elements of the 1970s establishment. Black struggles against escalating racism had made liberals suddenly and uncomfortably aware of the black presence. Yet how could that presence be acknowledged without also acknowledging the legitimised racism of the state?

Multi-culturalism provided the answer and the social policy makers heaved a sigh of relief. It was introduced in a variety of forms for all sorts of state employees. There were little sessions, special courses, additions to curricula and, of course, seminars. The solution was ideal. It was safe because it did not shift the status quo, it did not cause any aggro by challenging white authority and it acknowledged the presence of black people by, at the same time, defining and diminishing them with a false and vaguely colonial familiarity – a paternalistic 'we know all about you, though you can never know all about us'.

Now while the shadows of racist practices in immigration, nationality, housing, education and health deepen, while the state must resort more and more often to violence to control black rebelliousness, the multi-culturalists continue to deliver their cosy message – that Britain is forever democratic, forever caring of those who used to be called black but are now 'ethnic minorities'.

The DHSS places every prospective black patient under suspicion of being an 'overseas visitor' and co-ordinates its information with the Home Office. At the same time it is spending £184,000 through the Health Education Council on a centre to train health service staff on the problems of ethnic minorities. How will they train them? The head of the centre, Alix Henley, has written a textbook, *Asian Patients in Hospital and at Home*, which might give us a clue. In it, Henley (who is also the author of the police's profile 'pack' on Asians) explains the peculiarities of Asians to the white health worker. She writes: 'Asian patients may cry and moan in a way that upsets other patients in a hospital ward. They are unlikely to realise that they are disturbing other people.' But when Asian patients 'cry and moan' it is for the same reason as any others – because they are in pain or distress.

On contraception, Henley writes: 'Asian women would have heard rumours of the dangers of different methods, that the pill is cumulatively poisonous . . . it may be necessary to rule out these dangers explicitly.' Yet Asian women have legitimate fears about certain dangerous contraceptives, which are often prescribed to black women. If this is not acknowledged, health workers are being encouraged to brush aside very rational anxieties. But Alix Henley's book, which appeared in 1979, has already become part of the received wisdom.

A more hidden part of the state which is becoming increasingly prominent in the control of blacks is mental health. The police are increasingly taking black people forcibly to mental hospital (empowered by section 136 of the Mental Health Act). In one psychiatric hospital in East London, black patients are twice as likely as whites to have been taken there from prison. Starting from these very facts and arguing for a while that poverty and exploitation should be accounted for as explanations of psychological distress, the multi-culturists finally make their way to the familiar conclusion – the problem is cultural difference. The implication is that black culture itself is pathological.

In *Aliens and Alienists*, the authors Roland Littlewood and Maurice Lipsedge entitle their chapter on Pentecostalists 'A Prelude to Insanity?'. The Black Health workers and Patients Group, reviewing *Aliens and Alienists* in their bulletin 'Black Health', put it succinctly:

> For the old school . . . with its marked ethnocentrism, blacks were the problem. For the new school . . . with its liberal philosophies of 'multiculture', blacks are merely those unfortunates who *have* problems. If the former sought to blame the victim by saying that black genes were responsible for our oppression, then the latter simply substitutes black culture as the cause of our collective oppression. □

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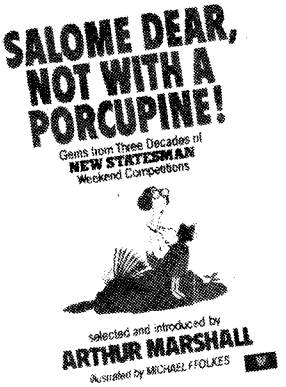
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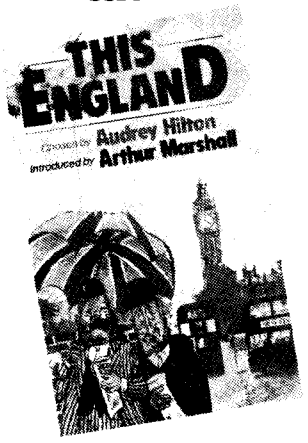

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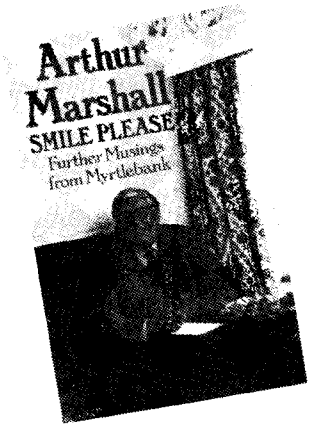

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DIARY

Christopher Price

Athens

In Greece, to bring Andreas's socialist parliament fraternal greetings from Westminster. (All Greeks seem to call their political leaders by Christian name only.) After the customary Byronic chummery about our mutual democratic heritage, we receive one well-coordinated plea after another on exactly the same theme – they wish to cash their Falklands cheque in Cyprus pounds. The line went something like this, though they didn't put it quite as bluntly: 'Look, we backed you when the Falklands were invaded and you didn't back us when Cyprus was. Invasion can't affect sovereignty, can it? Mrs Thatcher says so. So, what are you going to do to help us get the Turkish troops out?' By the end of the week they'd spoilt the clean Doric symmetry of the argument, by voting against us in the UN; but they'll go on nagging us to take our responsibilities seriously under the 1960 Cyprus treaties.

○

There's no evidence that Mr Pym will take the slightest notice. The latest official Foreign Office letter indicates a distinct tilt towards Turkey on Cyprus, which sits uneasily with our Prime Minister's principled noises about military dictatorships in Poland and Argentina. During our stay in democratic Greece, news comes from across the Aegean that there are currently 781 defendants in political trials in Turkish military courts with the death penalty being demanded for 283 of them; and that General Evren has been telling his people they can't vote for anyone but him, since they're not ready for Western democracy. I recently asked Mrs Thatcher if she would make a TV programme entitled 'Let Turkey be Turkey' to capitalise on her co-starring role with Reagan on Poland. No, she replied, not necessary. Democracy was being restored in Turkey. We now have an inkling of the sort of democracy both she and General Evren believe in. Military government, referenda and majorities of over 90 per cent. We've seen it before in Europe.

○

'The President is carrying out his duties in an impeccable manner and an impartial way.' Thus Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou this week, being cool and correct towards his wily, conservative President, Costas Karamanlis, who stands in something of the same relationship to the PASOK government as the House of Lords did to Labour between 1974 and 1979. Karamanlis may be one reason why Andreas has slipped out of what many Greeks thought were election pledges to ditch both the EEC and the US bases. Instead, he has gone in for vigorous renegotiation on both issues. He has just cancelled a set of NATO exercises to remind the Americans that he's serious.

○

One issue, however, on which they are both equally enthusiastic is Vergina. It is quite the most exciting dig of the decade – the tomb of Philip II of Macedon, unearthed in 1977 – and has an importance far beyond just archaeology. Generations of classical scholars were taught that the Athenians were civilised Greeks and the Macedonians ignorant barbarians, until Philip got Aristotle in to polish them up. The consequent dualistic and elitist framework of thought has had a dire effect on European literature and politics for the past 200 years. The astonishingly powerful wall-paintings in Philip's tomb now make it clear that this was a lot of nonsense and that the Macedonians were pretty civilised Greeks all along. Karamanlis – himself a Macedonian – pumped unprecedented millions of drachma into the excavations, which are being maintained by his Athenian cultural successor, Melina Mercouri.

ROGER WODDIS

Unbalanced

The Independent Broadcasting Authority has postponed The Truth Game, *John Pilger's TV documentary on the nuclear arms race, on grounds of 'balance' – 'In the interests of impartiality it should be transmitted as one of a pair of complementary programmes.'*

'Here', said the Doctor, approaching a bed,
'Is a really obsessional case:
Notice the Wimbledon turn of his head
And the paranoid look on his face.
He leans towards anything gutless or grey.
Recoiling from people with talents –
A morbid condition we call "IBA",
And marked by delusions of balance.'

The patient was keen (he was stark, staring mad)
To present an alternative side:
'The good must be shown as the equal of bad,
As Jekyll was balanced by Hyde.
You must be impartial, King Lear is a farce,
The wound is the same as the knife;
A message of love is a pain in the arse,
And death is no different from life!'

When one door is closed (so what else is new?),
We know that another door shuts.
The Doctor, expressing a personal view,
Declared that his patient was nuts.
'Whoever assures you that health is disease
Is talking a load of manure,
And those who are positive chalk is like cheese
Are sick. I'm afraid there's no cure.'

○

Melina remains an attractive flash of colour in a grey, male-chauvinist society. Cigarette in one hand, crackling telephone in the other, a hundred-odd suitors literally sitting on her ministerial doorstep, she exudes confidence about recovering her precious Parthenon marbles from the British Museum. It's not going to be easy. The 1963 British Museum Act severely restricts it from parting permanently with anything – much less its most revered centrepiece. In the end, British public opinion will have to decide, and the argument will be that we can look after them better than the Athenians. It is true that Athens has a worsening pollution problem; from the Acropolis, the blue Saronic gulf I first looked down on 30 years ago is now obscured by a gritty ring of smog. The new government is at last trying to do something; they've been banning half Athens' cars on alternate days from the city; they are literally rebuilding the Parthenon and the Erectheum pillar by pillar to preserve the stone, take out the 19th century iron clasps and replace them with titanium; and they have plans – not yet finalised – for a new Acropolis Museum, where the marbles can one day sit in air-conditioned splendour. But I suspect they will have to get quite a bit further down the anti-pollution and conservation road before the British Establishment finally agrees to part with Lord Elgin's loot.

○

Last year, just before the elections which PASOK won, I found tremendous enthusiasm for 'change' – the party's slogan – and in particular for workers' control in industry. Progress, I am sad to report, is slow. Indeed the sole company taken over so far is the makers of FIX – the only authentic Greek beer. The management weren't making a profit and just gave the keys of the brewery to the workers. I wish them well in this important Bennite experiment. I never could tolerate Athenian Carlsberg.

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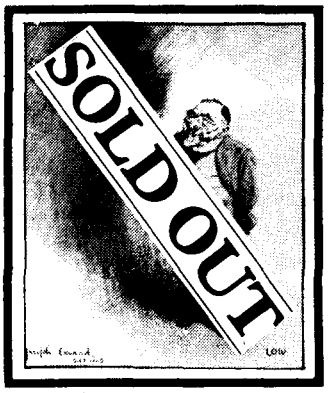

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Flushed down the drain

P. W. Botha is bringing apartheid to its consummation by 'abolishing' black people. John Kane-Berman reports

Camera Press

Buthelezi: violence the only alternative

Johannesburg

THOSE ABROAD and at home who say the South African Prime Minister, Mr P. W. Botha, is not genuine in his professed desire for political change do the man an injustice. Since his days as Defence Minister, when he also chaired a cabinet committee to write a new constitution, Mr Botha has been committed to political change – fundamental, structural and retrogressive.

Ironically, it was Dr Connie Mulder, the disgraced Information Minister whom Mr Botha beat to the premiership in 1978, who defined the aim of apartheid as achieving a situation in which there would be no black South Africans. While the cartoonists and liberal political columnists busied themselves scoffing at so preposterous a suggestion, Mr Botha and his colleagues quietly set about putting it irreversibly into practice.

Their new constitutional proposals became official National Party policy this month, when they were endorsed by the last of the party's four provincial congresses. The stage is therefore set for the Indian and 'Coloured' minorities to be given the parliamentary franchise (for segregated chambers alongside whites in a tri-cameral parliament) and seats in a multi-racial cabinet dominated by an executive President with near-dictatorial powers.

Ministers are now stumping the country peddling this new dispensation to white nationalists at large, as well as to businessmen in closed meetings. The line to English-speaking business in particular is that, if Mr Botha is not able to carry out his plans, the reactionaries under Dr Andries Treurnicht will take over and lead the country back to the stone age.

On policy towards blacks, Mr Botha and Dr Treurnicht do not differ. Their split came over 'power-sharing' with Indians and coloured people. Dr Treurnicht, who formed his New Conservative Party earlier this year, fears that admitting these two minorities to the white laager will concede a principle that would also give blacks a foot in the door. But the government's view is that these minorities have to be allowed inside in order to help whites pile up pressure from the inside to keep the door closed. Whether the Indians and – more important – the Coloured people will be thus enticed to Mr Botha's side remains to be seen. Despite an outward show of unity, the (Coloured) Labour Party is deeply divided on the issue.

The constitutional proposals have been attacked for 'leaving out' blacks. The criticism misses the point. Blacks have not simply been 'left out,' they have been *deliberately* placed outside the new system. Letting in 840,000 Indians and 2,700,000 Coloured people still leaves 4,600,000 whites in control. But admitting 22,000,000 blacks would not. So their constitutional future *has* to be separate.

WISHFUL THINKING in Washington and elsewhere that the new constitution is a 'step in the right direction' – namely a step towards the eventual emancipation of blacks – is encouraged by the common misconception that the South African government does not have a political policy for blacks, least of all urban blacks. This leads to the second misconception, namely that the matter is still open for debate. It is not – at least not in the mind of Mr Botha.

The government has a very clearly defined policy on black political rights and has been steadily implementing it since 1959, when the promotion of the Bantu Self-government Act gave effect to its basic principles.

This legislation sought to identify each black 'ethnic' group politically with its putative 'homeland' in the rural reserve areas.

Since these foundations were laid, the policy has been elaborated, refined, and implemented with mounting success. The best testimony to this is the fact that, to date, 7,800,000 black South Africans – more than a third of the total of some 22,000,000 – have been de-nationalised and turned into foreigners. This act of depriving them of their South African citizenship takes place automatically when the 'homeland', with which they are supposedly linked by historical tribal affiliation, becomes a constitutional state separate from South Africa.

Of the ten 'homelands', four have so far become constitutionally 'independent' – the Transkei this week entering its seventh year of 'independence.' To point out, as many critics of apartheid do, that none of these countries has achieved international recognition is true but irrelevant. Each of them, by virtue of liquidating its ethnic group's claim to rights in South Africa, is a trophy in the pantheon of apartheid.

It so happens that of the 7,800,000 people who lost their South African citizenship when these four 'homelands' became 'independent,' more than 3,300,000 do not actually live in these homelands, but in the 86 per cent of South Africa that is officially-designated as the 'white' areas. But as far as their political rights and citizenship status are concerned, this makes no difference. In the eyes of the government they are foreigners and have no more claim to South African political rights in the 'white' areas than does, for instance, the British Ambassador posted to Pretoria. It is the government's intention that all the other six 'homelands' will also become independent. The net result will then be that there will not be one single black person in South Africa with South African citizenship.

South Africa was constituted in 1910 as a unitary white supremacist state. Ever since, the black demand for the vote has been denied. Treating blacks as second-class citizens was traditional apartheid. But now after a lengthy process of constitutional consultation, in which the views of blacks were sought and listened to, South Africa is reconstituting itself as a partly multi-racial policy in which there is no place for blacks at all, not even as second-class citizens.

This continuing process of political liquidation of the black majority, nation by nation, involves not only constitutional restructuring but also inter-state agreement. Black and white, having been pulled apart politically through de-nationalisation, must for certain purposes be put back together again. A structure needs to be devised in terms of which the joint 'white-Indian-Coloured' political system can consult with the 'foreign' blacks, since their respective territories (the 'whites' areas and the 'homelands') are so closely intertwined geographically and economically. This structure is the so-called 'constellation' or 'confederation' of states. It is founded on two cardinal principles. First black denationalisation, and second, each state making up the confederation reserving the right to decide what it is prepared to discuss with the other states. The most important issue excluded from discussion by this process of denationalisation is of course that of black political rights in the institutions of what was once merely the 'white' areas of South Africa but is now a foreign country.

One consequence of this process of replacing traditional apartheid with apartheid based on constitutional entrenchment and inter-state agreement could be that black political exclusion is so firmly entrenched that the possibility of reversing the process becomes impossible to contemplate. Clearly, this is what the government is hoping for. The opposite consequence would be that there is no let-up in black demands for political inclusion but that the constitution cannot accommodate them and has to be overthrown.

In a speech denouncing both the de-

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nationalisation plans and the new constitutional system, Inkatha President and Kwazulu leader, Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, recently told a rally of 10,000 people in Soweto: 'If we cannot resist these final apartheid plans of the government, we will have been successfully "flushed" out of the arena of democratic opposition and the only alternative left will be violence.'

Despite the noise that Dr Treurnicht and the overt reactionaries are making on his right, Mr Botha is not a reformer. He is bringing apartheid to its consummation. □

UNITED STATES

Campaign in a quagmire

Claudia Wright on Ronald Reagan's election flop

Washington

LAST WEEK'S Congressional elections were the opening shot in the elections of 1984. It is now about six weeks before the first Democratic candidate formally declares himself for President, and only 14 months before the first Presidential primary contest. The 1984 campaign has started with a sharp, though not a mortal wound for President Reagan and Vice-president Bush. The loss of 26 seats in the House and the razor-thin margins by which the Republicans hung on to five seats in the Senate are not the worst results the White House has suffered in such mid-term tests, but they leave a thin trail of blood which excites the instincts of the Democrats, rebel Republicans, and the so far somnolent newspapers.

Sniffing after the blood is a highly nervous pack of Presidential contenders, and an equally agitated crowd of Senators and Congressmen who face the prospect of raising the million dollars likely to be required to retain a House seat, or three million dollars for a Senate seat, in less than two years' time. American electioneering is now driven by the race for money, and the sources of money instil such timorousness in the candidates that only domestic economic ruin, foreign policy disaster, or flagrant personal scandal can allow Democrats or Republicans to dare show what they stand for. The Reagan Administration has already shown it is capable of accomplishing all three.

In foreign policy terms, the Administration is likely to pull in a good many of its military horns. Troop landings on foreign soil – always a test of Presidential mettle – have been put off this month in Oman and Egypt. An exercise on the border between Honduras and Nicaragua is to be cut down in ferocity and threat. The National Security Council is obliged to approve each furtive move the US Marines make out of their bunkers in Moslem Beirut. Each of these moves is a potential political disaster for the White House, if the natives prove wicked enough to lure American troops into a casualty-prone quagmire from which the President that campaigns on toughness cannot readily withdraw them.

The Administration is also so strapped for money to finance the military needs of its friends that the NATO allies are being dragooned into making contributions. The Italians have agreed, for example, to return to the site of Mussolini's Abyssinian conquests in order to give hard-pressed Somalia $200m in economic and military assistance, because the White House has been unable to get less than half that amount from the Foreign Affairs Committee of the old House. The new committee will be even less accommodating.

The new German coalition of Messrs Kohl and Genscher is to be similarly obliging in the matter of saving the Turkish military junta from their economic mistakes and military incompetence. German money is to be pumped into an American scheme for building outposts in Eastern Turkey from which the latest in US nuclear armament – the B-52G bomber equipped with air-launched cruise missile – can be fired at the Soviet Union's soft underbelly. Elsewhere on the underbelly – at Japanese bases – the US is also edging closer to Soviet borders with increasingly more sophisticated nuclear forces. The possibility of confrontations with the Soviets will, as a result, be higher in the next two years than at any time since the Cuban missile crisis.

This is not something the edgy gentlemen of the Senate Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees will relish. The 2 November election results mean almost no change in their membership, but the trouble lies directly ahead – in 1984 a majority of the Republicans on both committees face re-election, while three of the Democrat members (Hart, Glenn and Cranston) are running for President. The circumstances are not propitious for controversial decisions, and the Administration is likely to pull back from any precipices it stumbles on.

Anti-Sovietism is bound to be a Reagan staple for the Presidential campaign, but it will have to be tempered by the fact that much of the country now supports the nuclear freeze resolution that was opposed by the White House and narrowly blocked by Congress last August. Ten states, 12 counties, 23 cities, 276 city councils, and 446 town meetings have now voted to approve a resolution called for a 'stop (to) nuclear arms race' and a 'mutual freeze on the testing, production, and deployment of nuclear weapons and of the missiles and new aircraft designed primarily to deliver nuclear weapons'. Localities dependent on defence industries and military bases are just as likely to back the resolution as those with little military employment and no obvious targets for Moscow. A poll of the Congressmen just elected for the first time shows they favour the freeze 67 per cent to 33 per cent. The ratio in the old Congress was 49 per cent to 51 per cent. Four of the 'Doomsday Dozen' – a group of Strangelovians in the House of Representatives targeted by the disarmament groups – were vaporised by the elections, and the eight who survived did so by the narrowest of margins. If it comes up early in the new session, the nuclear freeze resolution will probably pass by 30 votes.

Reagan's basic trouble with the voters – and this is something the American media cannot acknowledge because it reflects poorly on their manipulative role – is that he is not the Good Communicator he has been cracked up to be. He is a Good Polariser. And the golden rule of Presidential politics is that the winner must take the middle ground. □

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FRANCE

Back on the beat

Should *flics* be lovable? Diana Johnstone reports on a political battle within the French police

Paris

'THE POLICE ARE a reflection of society', says Bernard Deleplace, head of the Fédération Autonome des Syndicats de la Police (FASP). During the Nazi occupation, some were for collaboration and others for the Resistance. The five member unions of his Federation represent the majority of rank-and-file *flics* and police employees. He is currently engaged in a fierce political battle with the much smaller Union des Syndicats Categoriels de la Police Nationale (USC), which is strong among the *commissaires* and senior police officials, who generally miss the long years of right-wing government. Deleplace is trying to convince the Socialists that in order to bring the national police under control, they must support the democratic aspirations of lower ranking policemen against their superiors.

Deleplace is proud that his union was banned (and its leader Francois Rioux deported) under the Nazi occupation. FASP considers itself part of a tradition that goes back to the trade union struggles of a century ago. It is proud of its role after the Liberation, when the police obtained full union rights for the first time, though the right to strike was withdrawn two years later. The USC, on the other hand, was founded by *commissaires* who had been purged from the police as Nazi collaborators, but reinstated as the 'cold war' set in.

The Federation thinks of itself not only as the guardian of policemen's material interests, but also of their professional ethics.

A model representative of this professionalism is Maurice Grimaud, who as Paris Prefect of Police in May '68 kept his head while government leaders were losing theirs and saw to it that not a shot was fired during those stormy 'events'. Thanks to Grimaud's tacit understandings with student leaders, both sides went through their violent improvised ballet in the streets of Paris without actually killing anyone. But from 1968 onwards, relations between the police and the general public deteriorated drastically.

'Up to 1968,' recalls Deleplace, 'policemen were more or less accepted in French society. You used to see them cycling through the city streets – they were called *hirondelles*, or "swallows", and they looked a bit like birds with their capes flowing behind them. They were friendly figures, not threatening.

'After May '68 all that changed. Interior Minister Raymond Marcellin got the assignment of preventing such a thing from ever happening again. The *hirondelles* were taken off the streets, and police parked for hours on end packed into caged vehicles in front of schools, from time to time coming out in full battle order to frighten the young. Policemen were taught that long-haired students were a threat to society.

'Then the economic crisis came and the next Interior Minister, Michael Poniatowski, began to apply the same tactics to labour and social conflicts.'

Deleplace is clear that economic recession and demands for 'security' go together. 'Today in one European country after another,' he says, 'the media talk of terrorists, and people are asked to sacrifice some of their liberty for the sake of security. We are campaigning internationally not to fall in that trap.' FASP leaders disagree strongly with their British police colleagues, who demand measures like the introduction of the death penalty while claiming to be apolitical.

In the absence of any real terrorist threat in the 1970s, the French Right tried to work up public anxiety about a rising crime wave, although the streets of Paris in fact remain among the safest in the world. Special brigades were sent out to bag their quota of suspect criminals. They soon ran up an impressive list of 'bavures' or 'botched' jobs – a euphemism for killing or wounding innocent people.

FASP WELCOMED the election of President Mitterrand last year as a chance to return policemen to their proper mission of public service and to restore relations with the public. It presented a reform programme and called for a code of professional ethics for policemen that would help them to refuse illegal or improper orders. FASP also asked for an independent commission to investigate matters of public concern involving the police.

At first, FASP thought it had a 'formidable ally' in the new Socialist Interior Minister, Gaston Defferre. But a whiff of terrorism changed all that. Defferre is the 'permanent' Mayor of Marseilles. Last March, the Socialists made a poor showing in the local cantonal elections. About the same time, a train was bombed and an Israeli diplomat killed by unidentified terrorists. The right-wing press launched a predictable campaign against how the 'laxity' of the 'Socialist-Communist' government, with its 'excessive' concern for human rights was turning France into a shooting gallery.

Defferre concluded quickly that the Right was out to defeat him in next spring's municipal elections on the 'security' issue. He hastened to steal it for himself. In April, he told senior police officials that he was in favour of the arbitrary identity checks (long resisted by the Left) and that he thought the national police (responsible for urban centres) should have the same right to fire on those ignoring a shouted warning to halt as the *gendarmerie* has in rural areas. At present in towns, the police are supposed only to use firearms in self-defence. Appalled, Deleplace said his Federation did not want the right to shoot and complained that Defferre had given in to the 'commissaires' lobby'.

An illustration of what is likely to happen took place in the rue Rossini in September. Four Paris 'night brigade' policemen caught up with a car full of unarmed joy-riders and fired 14 bullets through its windows. A 17-year-old girl was killed and others seriously wounded. When the four policemen were charged with the shooting, Defferre rushed to their defence. 'In this day and age,' he suggested, the car might have been 'full of terrorists heading for an attack.'

At this point the political battle broke in public. Deleplace gave a front-page interview to *Le Monde*, protesting that law-abiding policemen did not need to be 'covered' by their superiors. 'It is a disservice to the police to let people think policemen are above the law, that every act of illegitimate violence will be covered.'

The opposing cry was taken up by the USC. At a rousing rally, USC leaders insisted that policemen could not do their jobs unless assured of automatic 'cover' by their minister at all times. More than a thousand cheering policemen hailed two of the heroes of the rue Rossini incident and demanded that Deleplace be sent 'to Moscow'.

USC seems to be having some success with this demagogy. In recent professional elections, FASP's majority dropped to 60 per cent from 70 per cent three years ago, while USC led the field of a half-dozen challengers with 18 per cent.

Deleplace has also been concerned to warn President Mitterrand about developments within the police. This message seems to have got through. According to Deleplace, some policemen on Presidential guard duty (notably during last year's 14th of July national day ceremonies) have joined in barracking of the President instead of trying to stop it. Followers of the opposition leader, Jacques Chirac, have been accused of stirring up the police.

Last summer, as a result, President Mitterrand changed his personal guard from the national police to the less politicised *gendarmerie*. He also took some police responsibilities away from Defferre and gave it to a new State Secretary for Public Security, Joseph Franceschi. Franceschi has put the *hirondelles* back on the streets and promised FASP to revive the issue of police reform. In his first radio interview last week, Franceschi spoke of French *flics* as 'the warmest and most human policemen in the world'. □

MADAME BLAVATSKY

INCOMPARABLE GENIUS OR DESPICABLE FRAUD?

The only way to resolve this problem is to read *her* works for oneself, and not what others, unable or unwilling to study and comprehend her monumental works, have said and written. If you are interested in discovering a philosophy, worthy of the highest intellect, embracing all religion and philosophy, and much science, we suggest you write for a reading list to:

The Blavatsky Trust (B)

P.O. Box 16, London W3 6HS

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LETTERS

The Commissars reply

Penny Newell, Ralph Birkenhead, Jeremy Hawthorn, Southwark-Peckham Labour Party, London SE5

As Vincent Hanna is still so miffed by our refusal to let him film our General Committee two years ago, it was good of him to take a quick break from Northfield to cover the Peckham by-election (*NS* 29 October).

Though he lumps us together as 'commissars', permit us to say that we are respectively this CLP's Publicity Officer, Assistant Publicity Officer and Secretary. Comrade Hanna may find it strange that such lowly officials should play any role in a by-election campaign, but NS's 80 per cent Labour Party readership will readily understand.

More seriously, though, why be surprised that we have worked closely with Harriet Harman on the campaign? It is the positive side of Party accountability that a CLP is responsible for helping its future MP and that, conversely, the MP-to-be promotes the Party as well as her candidature.

In our humble opinion this partnership succeeded in conducting a campaign with genuine local roots, around the issues that matter here. We did not allow apparatchiks from Fleet Street or the BBC to set the agenda. As the by-election bandwaggons move on, we shall be working together against the devastation caused by Government and the political confusion irresponsibly caused by the SDP.

We will naturally continue to view Comrade Hanna 'with deep suspicion', if only because his descriptions of living conditions in our area are as patronising as any we have seen. But we are a tolerant regime and shall yet give him a third and final chance before despatching him to the salt mines.

Figures of death

Philip Steadman, Centre for Configurational Studies, Open University, Milton Keynes

Prof. Martin is less than candid in his letter (5 November) about figures for fatal doses of radiation used by the Home Office. At the recent meeting of the Radiological Protection Society, to which Duncan Campbell refers, Prof. Martin spoke in some detail about the (unpublished) advice which the Protection against Ionising Radiation Committee (PIRC) of the Medical Research Council have recently given the Home Office on this question. The main effect of the advice, as he explained, is to raise the LD50* value for brief exposure doses to surface tissues from 450 to 600 rads (up by a third). A figure of around 450 has been generally agreed up to now among radiation biologists, and is used widely in other countries for civil defence calculations.

Prof. Martin indicates that the Home Office have at this stage simply sought advice from the PIRC, but not acted on it. Can he explain why then, in the April 1981 edition of the Home Office report 'Blast Overpressure and Fallout Radiation Dose Models for Casualty Assessment', an LD50 value of 450 rads is specified for doses to surface tissues; where in the December 1981 version of the same paper, this value has been changed to 450 rads *to bone marrow*, equivalent to 600 rads to surface tissues?

Prof. Martin says that the use of the 'Operational Evaluation Dose' expression is 'meaningless' in the context of casualty calculation, and was intended for quite another purpose. He has a point here. But he must know that the OED *is* as a matter of fact so used by the Home Office – as described in the same report. And it is used in such a way that the effective LD50 value for brief exposure doses in the latest version of the computer model is 800 rads (up by another third).

In this light, there is a certain irony in Prof. Martin's remarks about 'critical and informed readers', and the dangers of undermining public confidence in official organisations.

*LD50 is the level of lethal dose at which 50 per cent of those exposed are assumed to die.

Green and Liberal

Jon Carpenter, Ecology Party, London SW9

How genuinely encouraging to see Tony Greaves (Letters, 29 October), in an official Liberal role, claiming a 'greener' view for his party and a foot in the anti-militarist tradition. So, all the more unfortunate that Liberals who think his way have sold out to the SDP. It's doubtful whether any party that claims a soul can rediscover its integrity after engaging in this kind of electoral menage.

The sooner that such green Liberals as there are (the membership figures of the Liberal Ecology Group suggest there are very few of them) dissociate themselves from the SDP, with its centralist, growthist, nuclear and militarist mentality, the better for us all. If they need a new political home, Tony Greaves should take heart from the fact that the spirit of radical politics is very much alive and kicking in the political green movement that is now opposing the old political consensus of Left and Right all over Europe.

Impotent votes

G. Angus Lyon, London SE1

In an otherwise excellent article 'For richer, for poorer' (*NS* 22 October), you spoil it by saying at the end: '*Britain*'s politics have become increasingly polarised between the Labour heartlands of the Northern and Midlands conurbations and the Tory Shires and home counties'. The article was about England and Wales, not about Britain. England = Britain is an arrogant equation that is made all too often by English people.

Having said that, I would add that Britain's politics have become increasingly polarised recently by the fact that Labour support in Scotland increased at the last general election and has remained at a high level, unlike England where there was a swing to the Tories, even in Northern regions. It is likely that the high level of Tory support in England will remain and that England will again elect a Thatcher government. Scots may well consider this time around that a vote for Labour is a wasted vote, because it is an impotent vote. 44 Labour MPs were elected (out of 71) in Scotland in 1979, yet that Scottish Labour majority have been able to do absolutely nothing in the British context to protect Scotland from a government that Scots did not want. Scottish Labour voters are becoming increasingly frustrated by this situation and baulk at the thought of another five years of the same.

It will be interesting to watch the developments of *this* polarisation in British politics.

Low Pay in London Public Meeting

There are now about ½ million people unemployed in London. There are another ⅔ million low paid workers in London. Most of these low paid workers are women.

The Low Pay Unit, working closely with the Greater London Council, is about to start a campaign to tackle London's low pay problem.

To launch the campaign, the GLC Women's Committee and Industry and Employment Committee are holding a Public Meeting, and you are invited to come along and take part.

The meeting will be held in the Conference Hall, County Hall, London SE1 on Saturday 20th November, 2pm – 4pm.

The speakers will be: Ken Livingstone – Leader of the GLC
Valerie Wise – Chair, GLC Women's Committee
Emma Maclellan – Low Pay Unit
Jo Richardson, MP
Michael Meacher, MP

For further information about the Low Pay in London Campaign, please contact The Low Pay Unit, 9 Poland Street, London W1. Tel: 01-439 7537.

CRECHE FACILITIES AVAILABLE

GLC
Working for London

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It's improving sports amenities.

It's providing creches.

It's maintaining furniture and toys for play schools.

It's providing inner-city playgrounds.

It's tree planting.

It's conservation of the coastline.

It's converting warehouses into community centres.

It's gardening for the handicapped.

It's clearing canals.

It's interior decorating for elderly people

It's clearing derelict areas.

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It's creating conservation areas for rare animals and birds.

It's providing adventure playgrounds.

It's insulating lofts.

It's a radical method of tackling unemployment.

It's the Community Programme.

This list shows just some of the things that need to be done in every community.

The Community Programme, launched in October this year, will be paying people who want to work to do things just like this.

The people will be 18 to 24 year olds who've been out of work for six months or more, and people 25 and over who haven't worked for a year or more.

Working either full or part-time, they will be paid a proper wage based on an hourly rate.

But the Community Programme also offers them something more than money.

People who've been unemployed for long, long periods will now find themselves with a reason to get up in the mornings.

In many cases, with the opportunity of being trained in new skills.

And, in all cases regaining their dignity and self respect, eroded by months and months on the dole.

And as they rebuild their morale, so they will also rebuild their chances of getting back into permanent employment.

Where will the projects come from?

The Manpower Services Commission will provide the resources, but the work itself will come from local authorities, voluntary bodies, churches, community groups and industry.

In fact, from all those prepared to sponsor schemes such as those shown above.

The target is 130,000 places by September next. Giving new hope for those who have been without work for so long.

Which is why the scheme has wide support – including the CBI and the TUC.

If you'd like further details on how to join the scheme, or how to sponsor it, your local Jobcentre will gladly provide the information you need.

The Community Programme.

Work for people who haven't worked for some time.

MSC

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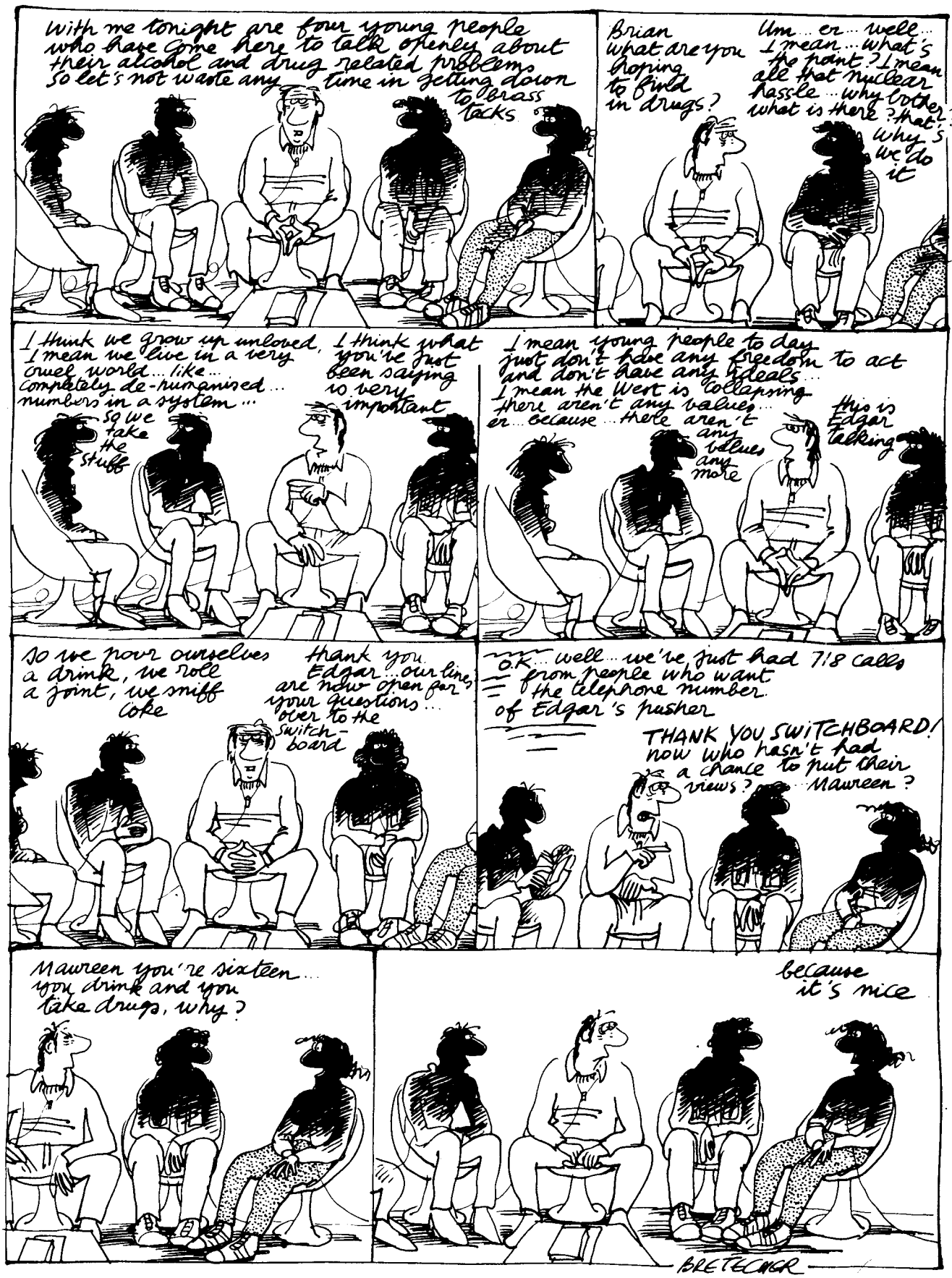
BRETECHER
where there's life


With me tonight are four young people who have come here to talk openly about their alcohol and drug related problems so let's not waste any time in getting down to brass tacks
Brian what are you hoping to find in drugs?
Um... er... well... I mean... what's the point? I mean all that nuclear hassle... why bother? what is there? that's why we do it
I think we grow up unloved. I mean we live in a very cruel world... like... completely de-humanised... numbers in a system... so we take the stuff
I think what you've just been saying is very important
I mean young people today just don't have any freedom to act and don't have any ideals... I mean the West is collapsing there aren't any values... er... because... there aren't any values any more
this is Edgar talking
So we pour ourselves a drink, we roll a joint, we sniff coke
thank you Edgar... our lines are now open for your questions... over to the switch-board
O.K... well... we've just had 7 or 8 calls from people who want the telephone number of Edgar's pusher
THANK YOU SWITCHBOARD! now who hasn't had a chance to put their views? Maureen?
Maureen you're sixteen... you drink and you take drugs, why?
because it's nice
BRETECHER

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Hugo Williams

Travelling roadshow

China Diary
STEPHEN SPENDER and DAVID HOCKNEY
Thames & Hudson £10

It seems a long time since we first heard about Spender and Hockney going off to China like Auden and Isherwood. It is just as well Hockney didn't postpone the trip a second time, as he nearly had to, in order to design more opera sets: the poet is looking understandably tired in some of these drawings, although Mr Spender seems to have come through the Mortality Gap nowadays and to be, like Laurence Olivier, permanently among us.

Altogether there are 19 pictures of him in the book, in various stages of exhaustion, five of Hockney, but only three of Gregory Evans, Hockney's assistant, who, Spender tells us, 'resembles one of the group of young Florentine nobles standing in the foreground of Botticelli's *Adoration of the Magi*' and who, I thought, ought to have been given more to do. Some of the pictures of Spender seem to have got to the poet finally:

> a drawing of me looking saturated with exhaustion like a sponge with water . . . the general impression I made in David's drawing was of bulbous obesity: bulbous cheeks, chins, limbs and fingers. Later drawings confirmed an overall redness rendered sheeplike by the whitest of woollen hair. The eyes are veined pink by eye-strain.

This explosion coming on page two quickly abrogates the traditional respectabilities of the travel book and nicely overshadows the token section on Mao which follows. A stammered 'entirely fallible' would seem to sum up Spender's thoughts on him.

There is no attempt at invisibility in the book. Any hopes the pair may have had of producing an objective study were soon scotched by the highly regimented schedule arranged in advance for them by the powerful Mr Lin, their guide. (Spender didn't feel that this man should have been more important than the university professor they met, but I found it refreshing.) Hockney: 'There were only about four or five Chinese people with whom we made any real contact, all guides.' So the whole project is observed as a media exercise from the start, and rightly so. The Famous Three are simply the most extraordinary thing happening within miles of anywhere they go:

> We did look rather funny, David with the flat white cap he always wears, even indoors, his shirt with horizontal stripes and his different coloured socks; Gregory with his Robin Hood jerkin (canary yellow) with a kind of cape at the back; and me with my enormous feet. The Chinese, I noticed, were always looking at my feet and politely concealing their smiles.

The first evening in Peking they are rushed straight out of their hotel into the home of Mr & Mrs Hunter, British Council representatives. Hockney stretches out on the floor and Mrs Hunter takes an interest in his odd socks. David tells her that when he was 12 he was influenced by Robert Herrick's poem 'Delight in Disorder' and quotes it for her. These socks of Hockney's flicker before the reader's eyes in scenes that follow, like spots of colour-tinting on old black and white photographs. I was grateful to him for kindling that wantonness in his dress so far from home. It is the right kind of Imperialism. 'Remember that tourists looking at things are just as interesting as the things they are looking at,' he says. 'When I went to Egypt I was one of a group of tourists and, after a bit, I found them just as interesting as the antiquities.' He means more so, of course.

It is his and Spender's grasp of the total theatricality of their charismatic calls on average working homes, atypically smooth-running collectives, child prodigies and zany teeth'n'smiles ballets which come to an abrupt end without any warning that makes their book so unlike all those pre-war travelogues by Spender's contemporaries, where the writer put himself about as a sort of free-range norm with optional invisibility, books which seem in retrospect less interesting than the Imperial model of Peter Fleming, whom they all made such fun of at the time. In those days, maps unfolded at the front and a group of hazy photos on art paper appeared between inappropriate pages with ironical captions by the author: 'The Permanent Way, as it is called' wrote Fleming under a photo of the wrecked Trans-Siberian Railway in his *One's Company*, 1933.

In those days, too, the author's progress, as it appeared on the map, was wiggly, de-

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noting actual travel. 'Even on the map,' wrote Fleming, 'where journeys fairly radiate feasibility, Shanghai and Canton looked a very long way apart.' Not any more. Today the route taken is in straight lines between airports and the maps don't pull out any more; they are 'an integral part of the text' and largely abstract. In *China Diary* the medium is the message is the layout: typeset in England, coloured in Switzerland, printed in Holland and displayed in the window of Hatchards. Why then is there a slight aura of jet-lag over the thing? Spender: 'In Nanking, we visited the artists. Can you add anything to that?' Hockney: 'I was feeling terrible then, I was green, I was beginning to think I'd go off back to Los Angeles. Who else did we meet in Nanking?'

For me, one pleasure of the book was in setting the picture of China being offered by Mr Lin and his cohorts – the brave new China of spanking new bridges and cloned museums – against the kitscher images popping before the visitors' eyes. At Panpo village, inhabited in Neolithic times by a matriarchal clan, one imagines the drily archaeological, vaguely feminist wisdom being urged on the group by their guide, as set against the actual impression of the occasion taken away by Mr Spender: 'There was a framed relief map of the area which had little red bulbs and little green bulbs on it. She pressed a button and the green bulbs lit up, another and the red bulbs lit up.'

Muted slapstick is strongly in evidence at 'Poetry Magazine' where the gathered poets are upstaged by a large fluorescent thermos flask standing on the table before them. This thirst-inducing article features in the text and the photos and completely dominates Hockney's colour drawing of the room. The recital too is a barely stifled hoot: ' "Cuckoo cuckoo cuckoo" trilled a girl, hand to ear and eyes looking sidelong as she evoked Wordsworth's cuckoo.' There is this whole subversive level to Spender's writing which he has taken care to muffle from his erstwhile hosts who must even now be combing his stuff for cultural dissidence. So, although Mr Lin & Co might at first seem an encumbrance, in the end they provide a frame from which our gang can step forth, establishing the vital third dimension. Spender is always out there on a stage of his own making, exuding bashful tact, playing the human flypaper to perfection.

HOCKNEY'S contribution to the album is unexpected, for it is his personality rather than his art which makes itself felt. Spender the diffident giant uses him as his heavy, his trouble-shooter, his yes-butter-in-chief. It is Hockney who points out that all the cycles are padlocked in Peking, a fact which contradicts their guide's assertion that there is no theft in China. At the Art School David scrutinises certain Social Realistic pictures very carefully, face close to them, eyes screwed up, before observing, 'Surely this is literalism where everything is put in. But surely with old Chinese painting it wasn't like that.' One imagines the artist withering in his shoes. Tang Mu-Li, director of the Art School, informs them that only official professional artists get paid in China, amateur artists being considered only half or quarter artists. When Tang asks David what national exhibitions exist in England, Hockney replies 'Well, the best is the Royal Academy. It's mostly for amateurs.' Spender asks what happened to poets during the Cultural Revolution and is told that they were sent into the countryside to do hard labour, that those lucky enough to remain in town had to clean out offices and that others committed suicide or were put in gaol. (I wondered whether odd socks were permitted in China now that Love and Nature have been added to Construction and Modernisation as subjects fit for poetry.) Later, when they visit the collective, Hockney asks whether it wasn't an insult to the countryfolk to send townspeople to join them as a form of punishment. The assistant director agrees that it was. When Hockney hears that children aren't allowed into the fields with their parents, 'What, not even to *play* at working?' he asks, and it is Hockney who shows shock at the current ban on more than one child per family.

Such drawing as Hockney does produce is determinedly slight, and understandably close-focused – vases, tables, bikes – given the open spaces that must have beckoned: 'It wasn't easy being a journalistic artist. Photographing became more and more necessary.' His photos, too, are agreeably whimsical, a picture of a panda showing in the edges of a pile of folded towels in a shop window, Gregory peering through a model of Nanking Bridge (Spender supplies the dimensions), archaic hoovers. The only time Hockney the famous painter of Hockneys really cuts loose is on the river trip to Yang Shuo, where he finds a set of very steep Oriental-type hills which seem to resemble his drawing of Glass Mountain in 'Old Rinkrank', one of the Grimm's fairy tales he illustrated some years ago. Their universal odd-ness frees him and he paints, draws and snaps away with abandon: worth the price of the book.

> The difficulty I had, as we rushed around so many places, was that I never realised quite the speed with which we would have to travel. If I had known that, or if we made the journey again, I would have adapted myself to very speedy drawing.

I liked the idea of them doing the trip again, Spender retracing his exhausted footsteps aged 80+ and Hockney, who has been keeping him waiting for years of course, for operatic reasons, recording the poet's jet-lagged features with ever more provocative pen-sketches. Ideally, this *China Diary II* would have a back half in which three eccentric Chinese artists, not speaking a word of English, make a lightning tour of the UK wearing funny clothes and hats and taking photos of one another. That would be a work which did justice to Raymond Roussel's *Impressions of Africa* (1910), the model for all travel writing today, in which the narrator tours that continent without ever leaving his windowless caravan: a dignified voyager. □

PAPERBACK CRIME
Gillian Wilce

Clued up

CRIME has definitely not had its day but actually continues to pay, if publishing trends are anything to go by. Two new paperback series have lately been set afloat, and that at a time when the best of currently established crime writers are already to be found in more familiar paper covers.

The authors hanging around on one's shelves with a green Penguin logo, if not wholly green backs, hardly need enumerating – to name a couple of worthies at random, how about Peter Lovesey (Victorian England's Sergeant Cribb) and Harry Kemelman (Rabbi Small of Barnard's Crossing)? – and Fontana continues to provide numerous titles by the likes of Agatha Christie and Ngaio Marsh. James Melville's Inspector Otani (to Japan what H. R. F. Keating's Inspector Ghote is to India) has recently been in action again, gravely unwinding the case of *A Sort of Samurai* at £1.50 from Methuen, and Ruth Rendell's latest from Arrow Books is *The Secret House of Death* (£1.25) – not an Inspector Wexford mystery but with something of the same claustrophobic, strangeness-in-a-small-compass feel.

Last year's Golden Dagger winning novel, Martin Cruz Smith's complex intellectual and imaginative feat, *Gorky Park*, is now to be had for £1.95 from Pan. Like much of the most satisfying of crime writing, it offers a spy-hole into a different but solid other 'world' – this time Moscow life and policing. Only towards the end of this substantial read does the previously controlled ramifying of international skulduggery lurch out of hand.

WITH so much already on the market at tolerable prices, the new series, united only by their choice of the colour black, have had to find their own particular reasons for being. Jill Norman and Hobhouse's Crime Classics, all so far at £1.75, turn to the past. Frances Iles's *Before the Fact* (published in 1932 and the source of Hitchcock's *Suspicion*) – an exact and relentless study of collusion with roguery to the point of self-destruction – might genuinely lay claim to classic status. The unmemorability of the other three makes one wonder, though, if classic here means anything more than serviceable old crime novel which doesn't happen to be in print. They are all very English and all jolly dated, with Edward Young's 1963 spy yarn *Fifth Passenger* reading as if it had been written at the same time at Cyril Hare's 1937 London police investigation, *Tenant for Death*, or maybe Allan McKinnon's cheerily implausible and romantic adventure, *House of Darkness* (1947). The idea remains potentially interesting but serious

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intent would have been much enhanced by the offer of some information about these resuscitated authors and the earlier fortunes of their books.

The Keyhole Crime series, started by Mills & Boon after the pattern of their commercially successful romances, is cheap, eclectic and prolific, with four titles appearing each month at 95p-£1.15. The romances, though, are formulaic enough to meet the same expectations over and over again while the detective/thriller fictions vary hugely in shape, tone and quality. The mystery is always solved or resolved, of course, but it may be in the midst of such breathlessly unconvincing nonsense as Charlotte Armstrong's *Dream Walker* or in the work of the excellent Simon Brett who manages so deftly the ingredients of the classic detective story, with his amateur sage and Bells-drinker, actor Charles Paris, whose world of fellow thespians, BBC producers and agents is disrupted at regular intervals by outrageous sudden death. Outbreaks of pure froth, like Marian Babson's *Bejewelled Death*, share the black-backs with sharp etchings of family nastiness such as Robert Barnard's. In his *Mother's Boys* a not-so-bright sample of the British police fails to work out the answer to which the reader becomes privy (together with a suffocating awareness of the worst being about to repeat itself), but worries about 'the prospect of figuring in a national civil rights scandal, with articles in the *New Statesman* and questions to the Home Secretary in Parliament'.

Mark Hebden's Inspector Pel (as appearing in *Death Set to Music*) is an irritating as well as irritated shadow of Great Continental Detectives we have known, but Robert B. Parker's Boston private-eye/narrator manages, or rather fails, to guard the eponymous radical lesbian feminist of *Looking for Rachel Wallace* without either of them quite becoming caricatures. Parker stirs a measure of doubt – often of a feminist nature – and a pinch of humour into the trad. macho private-eye mix.

One of the most gruesome of Keyholes so far has been Jonathan Ross's *The Deadest Thing You Ever Saw*. It is not the horrible crimes, the pace or the procedures that give cause for concern so much as the possible state of the author's psyche. Surely a police department can conduct an enquiry without every copper in sight being distracted or tempted or teased or beguiled by every woman he meets? Mr Ross may have been trying to make a point. If so, it escapes me, and the end result is creepy beyond, I hope, intent.

All in all, then, a series to be welcomed cautiously by crime addicts, not least for its prices, but bought with some discrimination.

And finally a positive plug for two recently-into-paperback thrillers, both of which turn conventions around to provocative effect. In Vladimir Volkoff's *The Turn-Around* (Corgi, £1.75) Parisian espionage is used for personal ends and with odd and personal results, while Sam Greenlee's *The Spook Who Sat By The Door* (Allison & Busby, £1.95) bends the US's own systems inexorably back on Whitey. □

New Oxford Paperbacks

Destinations
Jan Morris
Illustrated £2.95

Eothen
or Traces of Travel
Brought Home
from the East
Alexander Kinglake
Introduced by Jan Morris
£2.95

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Horst Koegler
Second edition
Illustrated £5.95

Sydney Smith
Alan Bell
Illustrated £3.95

Hugh Gaitskell
Philip M. Williams
Illustrated £5.95

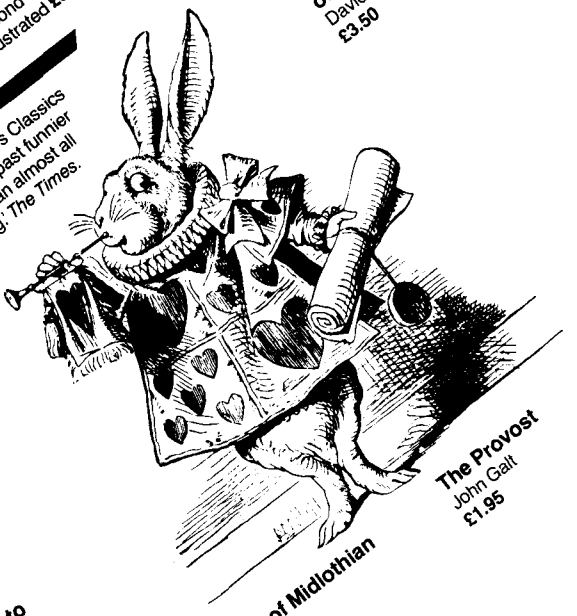
Personal Impressions
Isaiah Berlin
Edited by Henry Hardy
Illustrated £2.95

Saki
A Life of Hector Hugh Munro
with six stories never before collected
A. J. Langguth
Illustrated £3.95

The Oxford Dictionary of Saints
David Hugh Farmer
£3.50

New World's Classics

The excellent Oxford Paperback series of World's Classics continues to pour out riches of the past funnier and more illuminating than almost all contemporary writing. *The Times*.



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£1.50

Oxford University Press

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Two Poems

from Regent's Park Crossings

by

Carol Rumens

Phaedrus

The souls of lovers, said Socrates
to his young companion,

can complete their wings only
by embracing philosophy.

The way hard, these friends
paddled the stream, arousing

a bright complication of water.
All through the hot mid-day

their silvery dialectic
shimmered below plane-leaves.

Summer wings stirring the air,
love talked itself to oblivion.

They parted, not with a kiss
but a prayer, honouring wisdom.

Appearances

How like a branch a man
who stands in a high tree!

Blackly he bends on the bending
bough in the blind light.

Smoke rising towards him,
he patiently saws, diminishing

his own margin of safety.
He'd fall with his branch, of course,

in the next frame of the comic,
pursuing to its limit

this art of camouflage
now gathering its echoes –

a moorhen's weed-green legs,
the absurdly familiar smiles

of two who have just met
and share by chance their seat.

TRAVEL
Stephen Brook

Mule-trains

The Valleys of the Assassins
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A. W. KINGLAKE *Century* £3.95 & £6.95
A Tramp Abroad
MARK TWAIN *Century* £5.95 & £7.95
Southern Cross to Pole Star: Tschiffely's Ride
A. F. TSCHIFFELY *Century* £5.95 & £7.95

Travel books are back in fashion, and an assortment has just been reissued in a bulky paperback series. Paul Fussell, in *Abroad,* dismissed Freya Stark as an indifferent writer but concedes she is a remarkable traveller, as two of the volumes confirm. In **The Valleys of the Assassins** she is deep in the remote Alamut region of Persia when she falls desperately ill. At the first sign of improvement, instead of returning to Qazvin and a doctor, she hops back on her mule and crosses an almost impenetrable mountain range.

The intrepid Dame Freya is admirable but scarcely loveable. She is brusque, utterly self-assured, immensely determined. She helps the sick and the wretched but does not comfort them; in the great scheme of things she can do nothing about poverty and pain. Awesomely formidable, she has wit if little humour, and her astringency alarms as well as amuses. She has no romantic illusions about the primitive people she encounters, but neither does she entertain sentimental notions about Western superiority.

Her greatest enthusiasms – for landscape and solitude – are also reflected in **The Southern Gates of Arabia.** She wandered inland up the wadis from the southern coast, only to be thwarted by near fatal illness. The interest of the book lies less in high adventure than in the detailed and sympathetic portrayal of an ancient and inaccessible way of life: harems, rituals of hospitality, weddings, and an extraordinary glimpse of a 'learned widow' running a religious study group in the desert.

One hundred years earlier, in the 1830s, A. W. Kinglake recorded his meanderings about the Middle East in his celebrated **Eothen.** In an interesting introduction, Jonathan Raban maintains that Kinglake's carefree, lofty tone is a literary strategy devised to portray the East through the eyes of 'a close blood-relative of Flashman'. I'm less sure. Kinglake's callowness strikes me as genuine, if occasionally exaggerated for humorous or ironic effect. He depicts an Orient of bright colours and striking effects, but the picture has no depth. Dame Freya, witnessing an elaborate Arab wedding, both describes and elucidates it; Kinglake dismisses a wedding at Suez with: 'I scarcely ever in all my life saw any phenomena so ridiculous.' That sentence corroborates Raban's other proposition, that Kinglake founded the tradition of British travel writing which includes Robert Byron and Evelyn Waugh. These writers pose as the ignorant Englishman abroad, mystified and largely repelled by the strange goings-on of foreigners. Entertaining, but often wearisome.

Mark Twain's charm and flippancy are far more appealing. In **A Tramp Abroad** (1880) he mocks the travel book genre by parodying it. Even the title is a joke. Intending to see Europe on foot, Twain in practice looks on his feet as a last resort. Sometimes he exuberantly abandons any pretence at all of veracity and launches into a comic novel, as in the description of his ascent of the Riffelsberg, a hillock near Zermatt. Having read up on mountaineering, he assembles an expedition of 198 persons, all roped together; the team includes 15 bar-keepers, four pastry cooks, and 2,000 cigars. After many misadventures the weary climbers complete the three-hour stroll in seven days.

In the mid-1920s a Swiss-born Argentinian impossibly named Tschiffely left Buenos Aires with two horses and rode north. On reaching the United States, nearly three years later, he found himself a celebrity worthy of introduction to President Coolidge. His journey became known as **Tschiffely's Ride** and his book about it is an account of the utmost narrative simplicity. Not for Tschiffely the posturings of Kinglake, the high spirits of Twain, or the scholarship of Stark. He does share with Dame Freya a dogged determination that drove this astoundingly bland schoolteacher to ride a horse over the Andes and through desert and jungle for 10,000 miles.

Tschiffely was not without curiosity, information, and a persuasiveness that enabled him to overcome endless obstacles, human as well as topographical. Yet his observations are invariably naive: 'Only a very few Indians understand Spanish. They are very interesting people, but exceedingly primitive.'

However, as I read on, my exasperation with this simpleton gradually turned to respect. Without a hint of self-dramatisation he calmly tells of the perils he encountered: poisoning, knife-fights, vampire bats, quicksand. His brave Patagonian horses are injured, he himself catches malaria, but on he goes, and with every page his authority grows.

Since the publishers have evidently dispensed with proof-reading (Norman Lewis's lamentably inadequate introduction to **A Tramp Abroad** contains five misprints in two pages), I have compiled a list of errors which I will be glad to exchange for two bottles of Krug. In addition, the maps in the Stark volumes label countless places she never mentions and very few of the ones she does visit; this is wildly irritating. □

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PORNOGRAPHY
John McVicar

Skin trade

The Pornbrokers: The Rise of the Soho Sex Barons
MARTIN TOMKINSON *Virgin Books* £1.95

From 1972-81, Tomkinson wrote what I feel is the best crime column around – the 'Business News' section in *Private Eye*. His hard-nosed, exposé style neatly serves the aim of *The Pornbrokers*, which unravels the commercial-cum-criminal operations that built up the Soho sex industries. Tomkinson's comprehensive and racy account focuses on who did what, when and how, while always reminding us of the political and moral changes which made it possible.

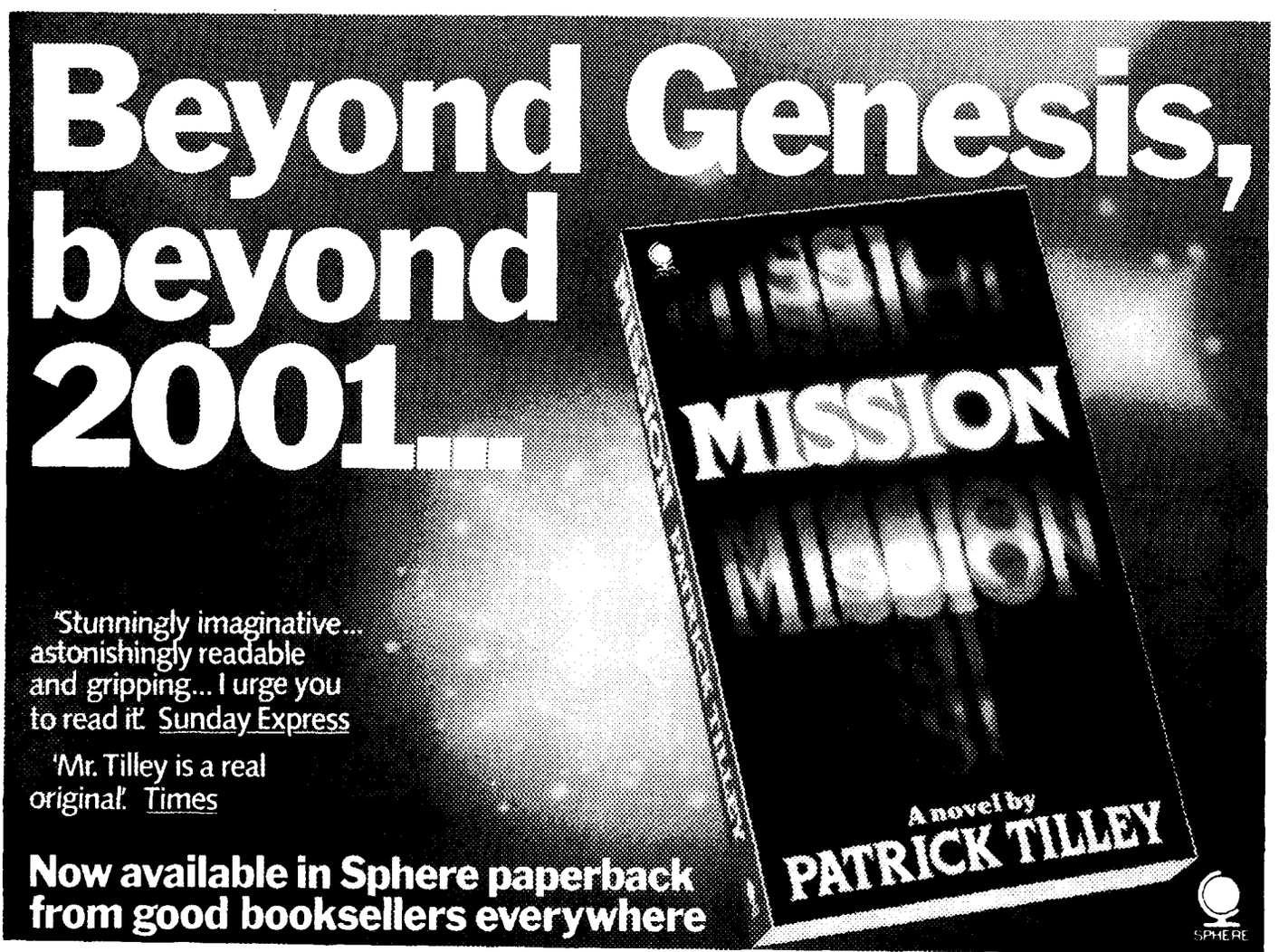
It's a story of how a bunch of detectives and a collection of ex-thieves, ponces and touts got rich and transformed the face of Soho to the horror and protests of the likes of Lord Longford, Mary Whitehouse, assorted MPs and Westminster Council. It's a cast that a 'carry-on' director wouldn't sneer at, and Tomkinson isn't stingy with the knock-about stuff: how, for instance, a detective disillusioned with all the corruption in the porn squad went to its head, Chief Inspector Moody, to ask for a transfer. Bill Moody demanded a hundred quid off him to grant it. Or how Moody's deputy Chief Inspector Fenwick had a shot at sub-editing a 'spanking' magazine.

Soho has been associated with vice since the 17th century but its present status as the centre of the new sex industries is a post-war development which was largely funded by the returns from porn. The dirty-book trade came to Soho in the early Forties but remained a fairly discreet affair until the late Fifties. Then, the economic boom and a more permissive political attitude (the relaxation of obscenity laws in '59) resulted in a seller's market which retained its profitability due to the cosy licensing system developed earlier.

The system's success in enabling a handful of pornshop owners and porn producers to retain their monopoly on the booming Soho trade of the Sixties was due in no small way to the 'sweeteners' paid to Scotland Yard's Obscene Publications Squad. The system also included arrangements for the Dirty Squad to satisfy its body 'quota'. Periodically outlets were raided with proper warning, with confiscated stock kept to a minimum, and stand-in managers brought before Marlborough Street Magistrates. There the clerk would courteously ask any women present to leave the court while the charges were heard. This kept the 14 detectives on the Dirty Squad happy, and what serious prosecutions there were tended to be against arty porn like *Lady Chatterley's Lover* or libertarian/left publications like *Oz*.

Towards the end of the Sixties, the availability of high quality, cheap Scandinavian porn broke the monopoly on supply and the regulatory system. The still enormous profits drew a number of new distributors in over the lower barriers to entry. The demand for porn was fuelled by the sexual revolution of the Sixties and the political pressure for freedom from seemingly arbitrary laws. It was about this time that an ex-thief named Jimmy Humphreys, then running some Soho strip clubs, paid £6,000 to open some porn shops. Humphreys was also one of those diarists who writes with a future public in mind.

Humphreys and his diary were crucial elements in the trials of most of Scotland Yard's Dirty Squad, which resulted in a dozen or so officers being jailed in 1976-7. It took a long time, though, before a reluctant Director of Public Prosecutions moved. Throughout the Seventies there were periodic campaigns by newspapers, reports by interest groups like the Longford Commission on Pornography blaming the explosion of porn on corruption in the Dirty Squad and similar accusations by a few MPs. However, in terms of controlling porn these convictions were an irrelevance. ▶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By the mid-Seventies, the young Turks in the business had swept away the old licensing system and the arrangements which kept the trade under wraps. Juries virtually refused to convict anyone; the law was in disarray; the police discredited. The market was a free-for-all and normal business practices in production, marketing, distribution and retailing prevailed. Consequently, pornographic magazines became commonplace and sex shops, massage parlours, strip clubs and so on mushroomed across the country.

Moreover, the new pornbrokers also used their marketing skills to sell themselves. They invoked freedom of publication and expression, claimed to be doing a public service and had clearly come out of the woodwork to go legit. And by the Eighties to all effects and purposes they are.

Tomkinson details some of the recent successes the law has had in curbing them but the conclusion he draws from his tale is that porn and prostitution should be legalised and regulated along the lines of the gaming industry. He takes Geoffrey Robertson's point that the only people corrupted by porn seem to have been the Obscene Publications Squad.

In dealing with the likely objectors to this recommendation he says that the 'women's movement attack on pornography is partly misplaced. What needs to be dealt with, if anything at all, is what drives people to pornography'. In fact, the feminist case (see Dworkin's *Pornography* and Griffin's *Pornography and Silence*) is not misplaced either partly or wholly, and it's not people but men who are driven(?) to it.

Tomkinson's account of how porn became a market leader is accurate and readable. But while his recommendations may be politic, he is not warranted in advancing them without meeting the case of those most damaged by pornography, women. Dworkin describes how reading porn for the purposes of her book made her physically sick. 'I became nauseous . . . full of fear and trembling and sick to death.' As she says, the President's Commission on Obscenity agreed that this was a frequent reaction of women exposed to porn, but nevertheless concluded that pornography had no harmful consequences. □

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Over the top

Speaking Up
BERNARD LEVIN *Cape* £8.50

'Enough, no more; 'Tis not so sweet now as it was before.' This second book of essays coincides with his return to *The Times*. 'Levin is back!' the cry ran through the alleys of Fleet Street and the waiting rooms of private clinics. Now I admit, even here, that I used to defend my old contemporary against friends whose views on what is funny and what is good writing are occasionally limited by what used to be called ideological considerations (whereas now his discourse becomes unintelligible in their paradigm).

He has come a long way since, he alleges, he sold newspapers on the street while the rest of us were pushed in prams by our nannies (100 words) on Wimbledon Common, or since (as I can prove by photostats sent to me by a defector) he was secretary to that notorious LSE Chess Club of 1949-50 of which John Stonehouse was chairman and one 'Kenneth Watkins' was treasurer. Certainly they played chess, but their primary purpose was free travel to Eastern Europe. Whose side were they really on? The stakes have risen since then. Levin's best writing was back in the mid '50s when Parliamentary sketch-writer for the *Spectator*, in that boring, pre-Suez little Eden of British politics. A piece on how to stay awake in the Press Gallery deserves a place in any anthology of English prose: simple (200), deadserious and with a clear subject matter. But his latest essays are too often inflated and grotesque, the rapid changes of subject matter within an essay become irritating, no longer a comic surprise; and with no definite subject matter, his freedom to roam too often becomes self-indulgence. His old plain prose has become convoluted baroque. And even if he had a mother and there is a North Thames Gas Board, I'm sick of the pair of them. His mock omniscience appals: Beachcomber did not have a *List of . . .* but a *Directory of Huntingdonshire Cabmen*, as five minutes in any reference library would have told him (300).

A sense of strain now suffuses the writing, not just the reading. Every first sentence has to startle: 'There is a man with a beard in Holborn who really does believe in free speech . . . '; 'A car dealer in Frankfurt, a Herr Jaromir Wagner (no relative), has announced his ambition to be the first man to . . .'; 'The repeatedly postponed death of Tito inevitably prompted thoughts of a political nature'; 'I've had enough of this nonsense, I propose to buy Harrods myself'; or 'This is when the fine folk with their airs and graces, not to mention their stately homes and indeed hyphens, have to listen, if they want to learn something, (400) to me, Bernard from Camden Town, grandson of Yossl the Tailor . . .' Relax, relax; the sweat of the shop begins to show: some of the garments are all seams. Just relax and think straight.

That is where I am even more disappointed. If the grandson of Yossl the Tailor now defends the values of 'the fine folk with their airs and graces, not to mention their stately homes and indeed their hyphens', that is his line of business and it need not stop him writing well and being funny (cf. A. Waugh). But his new radical right, aggro stance threatens both his senses of justice and of humour. He could not praise the RSC's *Nicholas Nickleby* without saying (500) that because it was adapted by David Edgar he had expected it to contain 'the Left-wing rhubarb juice that on a windless day can be heard sloshing about in poor Mr Edgar's brain from three miles away'. Totally unjust; from a few yards away I heard David Edgar's *Destiny* as having a rare imaginative empathy for different types of Fascism and ultra-Nationalism. And Levin's humour deserted him in his famous (he made it sound) attack on a short letter in the *Guardian*:

> As a young, unemployed, first-class honours graduate contemplating the amount of 'freedom' provided by my weekly £18.50 Giro cheque, I would be very happy to have Mr Benn as Prime Minister, or even to become part of the Eastern bloc, if this meant I could get a job (600).

Bernard thundered nobly about selling our 'birthright for a mess of pottage': Goethe, Tolstoy, Montaigne and the dead of the Hungarian Revolution were hurled at the unemployed graduate; but never did it cross his mind that he might be faced with a youthful Levin, satirically warning of what could well happen if fellow human beings have their lives rendered useless from the start, let alone being unable, like we two Bernards, to rise up the ladder so fast.

So 'Levin's back!' doesn't thrill me as it should, albeit he is back only once a week and better for the discipline of 1,000 rather than a sprawling 2,000 words. The new editor asserts control over his wayward, self-indulgent hero of the quick developers, the *arrivistes* and the *nouveaux riches*, even though he still lets (700) old Butt plod on, the rival reincarnation of G.K. Chesterton, plainly the columnist for the late developers and the decaying establishment who see anything new as a threat and murmur 'the fellow doesn't even know how to harness a horse'. Butt's readers must find Levin, as I now do, too clever by half (if for different reasons). I'm all for self-indulgence, once a week, and I'll read him once a week, but reading a whole book of him has this appalling effect and makes me able (750 as agreed) to go on and on until someone says □

STARTING SOON
– a new monthly paperback column in which **Alan Brien** writes about his choices from the books just out in paper covers.

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FICTION
Harriett Gilbert

Lunacies

Dancing Girls
MARGARET ATWOOD *Cape* £7.95
Vintage Stuff
TOM SHARPE *Secker* £7.50
Daughters of Passion
JULIA O'FAOLAIN *Penguin* £1.95
A Villa in France
J.I.M. STEWART *Gollancz* £6.95

'We are bemused and crazed creatures . . . mad, even, from an ideal standpoint we can glimpse by not adopt.' (R.D. Laing, 1967). The Laingian vision of 'sanity' as madness and 'madness' as a struggle for sanity flashes with disturbing, stroboscope lights through the stories in Margaret Atwood's new collection. On the surface, **Dancing Girls** is a witty, urbane set of social comedies. The contortions of her middle-class, liberal conscience when a young woman student finds herself pestered by 'a person from another culture'; the risk-free ecstacies of doomed love; the unswerving triteness of a travel-writer's responses when the plane on which she is returning home crashes into the sea – with shrewdness of observation, with karate economy of style, Atwood sights, then knocks for six such lunacies of human behaviour.

While doing this with her left hand, however, while playing with humour and twists of plot and different narrative voices, she is working at something rather more complex, sombre and unsettling with her right. These quirks and oddities, her stories suggest, are more than amusing eccentricities – they are symptoms of our alienation from a system of rules and social demands that conflicts with our inner experience. The question of why we construct social frameworks inimical to our psychic shape is, to some extent, begged – most of Atwood's central characters are women; people, in other words, whose say in the construction has been decidedly limited.

That we do so, however, is the essence of the stories. Not only that, but that we then attribute to our constructs a greater validity, a greater 'reality', than we do to the fantasies, fears and obsessions by which they were first engendered. The states known as 'madness' are a way to accommodate that lie – in 'Giving Birth' a happily pregnant woman keeps being followed by (or following?) another pregnant woman, a woman whom no one but she can see, who 'did not wish to become pregnant, who did not choose to divide herself like this' and whose labour is accompanied by 'screaming, screaming and mumbling'.

Addicts of Wodehouse, *Candid Camera*, apple-pie beds and banana skins will no doubt scramble to shoot themselves up with Tom Sharpe's latest novel. **Vintage Stuff** is the story of Glass-eye Glodstone, a *very* minor-public-school housemaster obsessed with romantic adventure fiction of the Buchan/Sapper/Hope variety. One of his colleagues (an anti-corporal-punishment wet named Slymne) lures him into a phoney adventure with messages (to be destroyed upon reading) from a Countess in Distress in France.

The classic ingredients of Farce are certainly present. Misunderstandings (both deliberately-created and otherwise); a cast of implausible characters; a plot of improbable coincidences. Indeed, in its fast-paced zaniness, *Vintage Stuff* could almost be swallowed at a gulp. What made it stick in this reader's craw were the nasty little lumps – present in other Sharpe novels, so inexcusable as 'part of the joke' – of xenophobia, casual snobbery and racism. Those, and the sickening under-smell of gratuitous, infantile sadism. In attempting to bring Farce up-to-date – in asking us to split our sides with laughter, not only at social embarrassment, but at torture (including electrodes to the genitals), mutilation and murder – Sharpe makes plain the inherent tastelessness and cynicism of the genre.

Daughters of Passion brings together, in a original paperback, nine of Julia O'Faolain's intense, and intensely personal stories. 'Legend for a Painting', the first, is both atypical and paradigmatic – a fairy story, its narrative voice is unusually formal and detached; but its subject matter is one that recurs throughout the ensuing collection. The dependence of women on men for their very identity, and the ways in which they abuse themselves in order to acquire that male-defined Self, these are O'Faolain's themes. The lady in the 'Legend' appears to be chained to a dragon. A knight thunders up to rescue her (ignoring her insistence that she's perfectly happy as she is) and, as soon as he has killed the dragon, realises that he's got it all wrong – that *it* was chained to *her*. The lady, however,

> Picked up a link (from the chain) that had become detached. 'I'll wear this,' she said bitterly, 'in token of my servitude. I'm your prisoner now.'

In the more realistic, 'serious' stories, a woman describes herself to her sister as 'valueless, being manless'; another cuts herself off from her roots to fulfil a (gay) man's fantasies; another bounces from 'ugliness' to 'prettiness' depending on the last man's judgment . . . For all the anger, bitter pain and sardonic humour of the writing, the cumulative effect on the reader is one of frustrated irritation.

J.I.M. Stewart (otherwise known as crime writer Michael Innes) has written, in **A Villa in France,** an eminently readable, amusing and vacuous novel. A pastiche on the styles and preoccupations of Trollope, Proust and – above all – Jane Austen, it has for its heroine a parson's daughter who, while a schoolgirl, refuses the hand of a dissolute, playwright neighbour; later to marry his tedious brother – an impoverished Catholic academic. Whether intentionally or otherwise, the plot pretty soon deteriorates into something closer to Mary Stewart than Austen – with mysterious wills, and strange young men lurking in foreign villas – while the disappointing denouement shows signs of authorial laziness, or boredom, or both. But then, as Stewart says in passing, when 'reviewed in batches by acrid women' what chance does a novel stand? □

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Partial Progress

DAVID ALBURY and JOSEPH SCHWARTZ *Pluto Press* £4.95

It is obvious to most people, more or less by observation, that everything from newspaper editorials to power stations is brought into existence by a social process, in which labour and money are put to work according to prevailing political and economic forces. Precisely the same goes for scientific, technical and medical knowledge, but here the facts of the case are masked by the image of science as the province of disinterested researchers, tirelessly pursuing abstract truth.

Albury and Schwartz's book is probably the best available corrective to this fallacy. It uses the experience of over half a century of radical science movements to make the point that science has developed in line with capitalism itself, and has now been almost entirely subjugated to its needs. Science operates in capital's image, and is largely organised in a manner increasingly reminiscent of production line manufacture; its products are dictated by business needs for new things to sell, or cheaper and more tightly managed ways to make them.

Partial Progress is illustrated with examples from Davy (whose lamp made things worse rather than better for miners, because it was developed in response to the coal owners' need to get at dangerous coal seams, not the miners' need for safety) to the microprocessor. The latter case study takes up a whole fascinating chapter, from the chip's start as a means of making lighter missile guidance systems, to its present-day application, the wholesale reconstruction of capital, industry and leisure. The book is well worth reading, even if you don't think you want to know about the politics of science and technology; but it is overpriced and badly edited.

Martin Ince

Philip Larkin
ANDREW MOTION
Philip Roth
HERMIONE LEE
Donald Barthelme
MAURICE COUTURIER and REGIS DURAND
Methuen £1.95 *each*

These booklets – the second batch in Methuen's Contemporary Writers series – share a failure to supply the promised 'thorough account of the author's work so far'. In Andrew Motion's case, this is intentional. Standard wisdom skims over Larkin's two fine novels and stresses the place of his poems in the anti-modernist 'English line'. Motion – whose volume is easily the pick of the trio – provides an antidote, paying almost as much attention to Larkin's fiction as to his nature poetry, and, in assessing the latter, seeking 'to establish his largely ignored adaptation of symbolist – and therefore by association modernist – strategies'. His readings of the novels (especially *Jill*) are perceptive, but available space permits only a sketchy discussion of the poems. The volume must, then, be considered a useful companion to existing criticism rather than a concise and self-contained study.

If Motion was hampered by lack of space, Hermione Lee has been positively hamstrung. Eighty pages – the average length of a Contemporary Writers volume – might be adequate to cover the oeuvres of such low-yielders as Pynchon or Heller, but, in order to encompass Roth's eleven works of fiction, Lee has been obliged to adopt a thematic approach, achieving brevity at the cost of completeness: novels are, after all, more than bundles of themes. Writers with a narrow range of preoccupations – Beckett, say, or Burroughs – could still be reasonably well-served by such an approach; with Roth, much is left unsaid (as Lee's closing remarks acknowledge) with the result that her claim for him as 'one of the most significant and remarkable of contemporary writers' remains a matter of assertion rather than demonstration.

Couturier and Durand faced even more fundamental problems, being completely unable to develop any kind of 'critical discourse' about Barthelme's fiction. Blithely admitting defeat, they examine instead its 'uncanny effects' on the reader. It is a measure of the ensuing ponderosity that Barthelme's weakest ever pun – ' "You're supposed to be curing a ham." "The ham died," she said. "I couldn't cure it." ' – is subjected to 16 lines of earnest analysis. Not to be read while driving or operating machinery.

David Montrose

New Left Review 135

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Annie's Coming Out

ROSEMARY CROSSLEY and ANNE McDONALD *Pelican* £2.25

Annie McDonald was 13 years old and weighed just over two stone when Rosemary Crossley met her for the first time. Incarcerated in an Australian children's hospital since she was three, and severely physically handicapped by cerebral palsy, it was assumed that she was also severely mentally handicapped. Unable to speak, Annie could not deny this. Rosemary became Annie's friend and teacher, patiently helping to unlock a highly intelligent and sensitive mind. But this was only part of Annie's coming out. She fought for her physical freedom in the courts when the Australian Mental Health Authority attempted to forcibly detain her in hospital – and won. In 1979 the Supreme Court ruled that Annie could leave.

When child abuse has become one of the deadliest sins in society's eyes, this book forcibly reminds us that we have yet to act 'in the best interest' of all children. Behind the closed doors of institutions children still endure the worst deprivations, without public protest or perhaps even awareness. Annie's childhood deprivations were numerous: no love or affection, no regular play or learning opportunities, no dignity or privacy and, sometimes, no food. But this is not just another book about 'heartwarming courage in the face of adversity'. It asks many questions about how society values handicapped people; for we tend to provide the best for those we value the most highly. And for the rest:

Rosemary Crossley, who wrote most of this book (though Annie's own brief contributions are perhaps the more pertinent and sensitive), believed that 'St Nicholas was not a hospital suited to intelligent children' She is right of course; people like Annie deserve better. But in taking this view she reveals what is perhaps the book's single weakness. Annie got the chance to read higher maths textbooks, to appreciate modern art, to attend concerts and plays. But were these the biggest gains? She acquired constant living relationships, security, dignity and respect, and the chance to be treated as an individual – the very things institutions deny. But aren't these the things everyone needs – no matter what their IQ is?

Alison Wertheimer

The Third World in Global Development

ANKIE M. M. HOOGVELT *Macmillan* £12.95 & £5.50

Ankie Hoogvelt, a Dutch sociologist who has been teaching at Sheffield for the last decade, wrote, in the mid-Seventies, one of the first textbooks in the then emerging field of the 'sociology of development'. In her earlier work Hoogvelt seemed set on effecting a rather bizarre marriage between Marxism and the evolutionism of Talcott Parsons, but the union was evidently not consummated and her new book is much more determinedly Marxist, sometimes to the point of shrillness.

If anything, over the last decade or so, Marxism has become the dominant intellectual paradigm in development studies. So what distinguishes this offering? It is a rather useful book in two related ways. First, Hoogvelt has again avowedly written a *textbook* which summarises the 'state of the art' clearly and reliably. The book is divided into two parts: 'Facts' and 'Theories', the latter subdivided into 'liberal' and 'Marxist'. Her account of Marxist theories is useful, though not comparable with the fuller treatment in Anthony Brewer's *Marxist Theories of Imperialism* (Routledge, 1980), but the best of the theoretical chapters is on recent developments in the 'liberal' tradition: theories of 'world futures', 'systems modelling' and the like, ranging from the Panglossian optimism of Herman Kahn to the doom-laden eco-predictions of the Club of Rome, via the 'international Keynesianism of the Brandt Report'.

The second, and even greater, virtue of the book comes in Part One. The bare title 'Facts' hardly does it justice. The character and organisation of the information deserve special praise. Her account is focussed clearly round the uncomfortable but undeniable trends brought forth by the 1970s: increasing differentiation *between* Third World countries; the rise of OPEC; and the growing internationalisation of production. She also offers full yet critical accounts of such elusive ideological developments as, on one side, the call for a 'New International Economic Order' and on the other, the 'basic needs' strategy so dear to bodies like the World Bank.

Other recent Marxist writers, it should be said, have drawn more far-reaching conclusions, but Hoogvelt has provided a useful, readable and stimulating account of recent major trends. You should not stop with this book, but you could do worse than to start with it.

Aidan Foster-Carter

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TELEVISION
William Boyd

Take four

AFTER SEVEN days of watching Channel Four some sort of composite picture of the new station is beginning finally to emerge. The effect on oneself is a little harder to evaluate, however. And the prototypical C4 viewer – assuming they're not all TV critics (though you could be forgiven for imagining this was the case) – is a curious hybrid. Not only does it live in a Spanish villa, wash its hair in Alberto Balsam, drink Mateus Rosé and subsist on a diet of Young's seafood but it also possesses a low brow – sufficient to take in **Countdown**, **Brookside** and the **Paul Hogan Show** – offset with the high domed forehead of the aesthete (**Voices**, **Matinée at the Met**) and combined with the troubled features of one with a fully functioning social conscience – **The Other News**, **20/20 Vision** and **Opinion**. In other words, something for everyone. It's not an objective to be sniffed at.

The mix, now the first week is over, seems unexceptionable. All in all, just about right. Perhaps we can start treating it like the other channels now and begin watching what we want. It's going to make life a little harder to organise, though, if it carries on in the same successful vein – the soft whirr of the video recorder will join the orchestra of domestic background noises of grumbling boiler, scratchy radio and shuddering fridge.

There were at least three 'musts' in week one. **Walter, P'Tang, Yang, Kipperbang** and **Nicholas Nickleby**. *Walter* was a forthright and compelling debut for the Film on Four slot with a memorable performance from Ian MacKellen in the title role and a potency of impact – Walter being dragged off his mother's corpse; Walter nursing a paraplegic on his first day in the mental hospital – that was not only hard to watch but unbearably poignant.

It was counterposed nicely by Jack Rosenthal's unbelievably sage and laid-back adolescents in *P'tang, Yang*. Set in 1948, the play concerned the sexual ambitions of 14-year-old Alan Duckworth – which were modest enough, as it turned out. He wanted only to kiss the distant and beautiful Ann, a girl in his class. He finally got his chance in the school play, but held back, content to stay with the inviolable charms of anticipation; happy to keep reality and its disappointments at bay a while longer. At first I thought *P'Tang, Yang* was a little too heavily rose-tinted (retrospective longings for some of that sagacity) but there is a brief phase of adolescence that is entirely self-sufficient and calmly self-confident before the false lures of adulthood become too enticing. It has its best chronicler in Rosenthal and he was ably assisted here by fine acting from the young cast.

MacKellen's performance as the handicapped Walter at the beginning of the week was balanced by David Threlfall's agonising Smike at the end. I never saw the RSC's production of *Nickleby* and perhaps it is sufficient indication of the success of this televised version that it makes me realise what I've missed. This was an entirely 'theatrical' production – we saw the stage and the audience – but one never had the sense that it was merely the video-ed recording of a stage show. This was largely the result of sensitive and subtle directing (by Jim Goddard) and was brought about by judicious use of close-ups and skilful employment of that well-worn device of addressing the camera.

There was one extraordinary scene where Fanny Squeers tried to barge Tilda Price out of shot and, failing in this, attempted to cover the lens of the camera with her hands. We cut away to the audience too as they wildly applauded Nicholas's thrashing of Squeers.

The fact that one felt like joining in is testimony to the play's – and Dickens's – effectiveness. We were seeing also a more cynical and powerful Dickens than the one we're used to on screen, but the comparison with *Walter* remained apt in that in both these harsh worlds the values underwritten were essentially the same. The message was, in Auden's words, that 'we must love one another or die'. Both *Walter* and *Nickleby* exert such a powerful emotional appeal – set us applauding in the pit – because, despite the torments and the cruelties, the key verities – friendship, tolerance and compassion – manage to survive.

THEY ARE not qualities one finds on the American football field, however. Indeed, they are ruthlessly eradicated from the outset in the hell of the pre-season training camp, as we saw in **Max Boyce meets the Dallas Cowboys**. Now, I find Max Boyce very resistable, but this documentary went some way to overcoming this reaction as Max forlornly – vainly – attempted to whip his body into some sort of physical shape in an attempt to play running-back for the Cowboys. He didn't make it, of course, and almost forfeited my newly won sympathy by singing a plangent Country and Western number on that very theme (too much unapologetic sentiment – that's Max's problem). However it was a useful introduction to the regular Sunday afternoon session of American football that we're promised (assuming the current players' strike ends soon). This is a C4 innovation that's very welcome. American football is fascinating and ideal for TV. In fact, I can't understand how it can be watched any other way. The slow motion replay brings it into its own. Without it, it's just a frantic scramble. But played back, all the skill and precision emerge. Stay with it.

Regular American football is an obvious example of C4's new programming. In the drama field it is quality rather than novelty that will ensure its ratings. But a third factor that the new channel has introduced – and one that can be both unusual and effective – is more time. **The Tube** was different from all other rock shows on TV for the simple fact that it lasted a lot longer. An hour and three-quarters was just about right. Whether an hour's length is correct for the *News on Four* at seven in the evening is something we'll know before too long. It depends almost entirely on what's happened that day, of course – I can foresee some lulls that will have the team begging to be truncated – but overall the idea seems sound and it certainly makes the interviews more satisfactory.

Last Monday's mini-budget was a case in point. Both the interviews – with Howe and Shore – seemed more interesting because the extra time precluded the sort of heedless slogan-mongering that the two-minute slot usually provides. Or put it another way: heedless slogan-mongering in long interviews will make politicians look even more stupid. I'm not sure that having no desks is a good idea, though. Peter Sissons's folder is becoming a major distraction, wobbling around as he tries to keep it balanced on his kneecaps. But all this news watching has highlighted an intriguing phenomenon. Tory voices are getting softer and softer: Thatcher now sounds permanently on the brink of tears and Howe like a doctor addressing someone recently bereaved. I suppose it's sinisterly pertinent.

But I digress. A good start for Channel Four. Some gremlins, some flops – of which more later – but a lot to be encouraged about. □

PLANNING
Jules Lubbock

Keeping track

THE GLC plans to axe or severely curtail publication of the Survey of London as an economy to offset part of the cost of their new social and economic programmes, and to hold the rise of the rate precept to 30 per cent.

Socialists may feel justified in regarding these expensive tomes which record the history of London's architecture and urban history in meticulous detail as a mere luxury in comparison to the new Police, Ethnic Minorities and Economic Departments, and as much of an irrelevance to their objectives as funding the Royal Opera House extension, or running the Iveagh Bequest of Old Master Paintings at Kenwood. When every day a new book on the glories of life in the English Country House rolls off the presses it is easy enough to regard architectural history and conservation as a right-wing fetish.

If that is their reasoning, they must think again, for they forget that there is a socialist tradition of architectural history in this country, stemming from William Morris whose Society for the Protection of Ancient

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Buildings was the inspiration for the Survey itself. Not only are they on the point of damaging an irreplaceable and highly cost-effective defence in their avowed policy of preserving London from property speculation (last year the Survey cost £183,000) but they are on the brink of destroying an important and practical part of London's socialist heritage.

For the Survey was begun in 1894 by C. R. Ashbee as a voluntary enterprise under the auspices of the LCC with the specific aim of assisting in the preservation of local amenities including parks, gardens, open spaces, trees and townscapes, humble buildings of historic interest as well as fine houses and churches, particularly in those areas of East London and Essex which were being privately redeveloped for working-class housing. Ashbee wanted the country houses with their parks, whose estates were being used for building land, to be used as community centres, libraries and local museums for the benefit of the new inhabitants, instead of their panelling being stripped out and sold by antique dealers to furnish the mansions of the West End.

In short his object was to achieve the re-appropriation of London's cultural heritage for the whole community, by means of publishing the historical information. The Survey was the pioneer of our modern planning and listing legislation.

Today the Survey has become, in effect, the research department of the Historic Buildings Division of the GLC which is responsible for the day-to-day business of vetting planning applications for listed buildings and conservation areas, and for presenting expert evidence to public inquiries. It is also a publicly accessible archive for local communities. When the Covent Garden area was threatened with comprehensive development a decade ago, the Survey's 1970 volume was to hand as a basis for the listings which undermined the whole scheme. Morris and Ashbee would have rejoiced.

The principle at stake is this: planning controls and listings, however imperfect, must be considered as the public ownership of some of the rights attached to private property. And the knowledge incorporated in the Survey is, in effect, the title-deeds to those public rights. Knowledge, in this case, is power; conversely, as Marx once exclaimed, 'Ignorance never yet helped anybody!' To axe or reduce the Survey, therefore, would be to privatise those rights, to make a free gift of them, particularly in areas not yet covered.

For a socialist administration to dismantle part of the apparatus created by their pioneering predecessors in order to abrogate the right of private property is monstrous. No logic, not the logic of revolution and certainly not the admirable logic which has guided the present administration in setting up its new departments, can justify it. The job of undermining the planning acts can be left safely in Mr Heseltine's hands. It is the task of socialism, as Trotsky said, not 'to repudiate the art of the past, but to master it and make it the instrument of socialist emancipation'. □

JAZZ
Charles Fox

High trier

Steve Lacy Sextet
Round House

Just as dogs get to look like their owners, so musical instruments – the less common ones, anyway – can become confused with the people who play them. Nowhere was this more apparent than when Sidney Bechet imbued the soprano saxophone with the larger-than-life exuberance and expansiveness that distinguished his musical persona. One of the very greatest of jazz soloists, Bechet had, nevertheless, a capacity to exaggerate, upstaging his companions as outrageously as Donald Woolfit ever did. Tender rhapsodising became positively voluptuous, brazen flights teetered on the brink of over-kill – yet rarely fell over. And every phrase was alive with that passionate tingle, that pulsating vibrato.

Bechet was the first virtuoso of the soprano saxophone, splendidly equipped to subdue that instrument's contrary nature (it is, for a start, out of tune with itself). Nowadays jazz is packed with saxophonists who double on soprano largely because John Coltrane made it fashionable to do so. But Coltrane took up the soprano after already establishing his style on tenor – and after hearing the playing of a musician who is the other major innovator on that instrument: Steve Lacy. Born in New York in 1934, Lacy started off as a proper jazz buff, buying records by Ellington, Armstrong and Tatum. When he began sitting in at clubs it was alongside relative veterans such as Red Allen, Jimmy McPartland and Hot Lips Page.

But in 1956, with a single bound, he found himself working with the most daring of contemporary musicians, the pianist Cecil Taylor. Yet at that time Taylor's music still had recognisable links with Ellington's. So did that of Thelonius Monk, into whose quartet Lacy moved a few years later. And Monk's compositions affected Lacy's thinking in a way that is still visible. The themes Lacy's Sextet performed at the Round House were never pastiches, never precisely influenced by Monk, yet they possessed a familiar jaggedness, their rhythms echoed that bumpy irreverence.

Steve Lacy has lived in France since the end of the 1960s. Perhaps the move to Paris affected his standing in American jazz circles, just as, in the 1920s, Bechet's careerings around Europe – including forays into the Soviet Union – resulted in a major jazz artist being ignored in his homeland. Yet Lacy has worked alongside European free improvisers, and to the habitual elegance of his playing has added ways of growling and warping notes, generally extending his emotional range. His concept is essentially musical, using pitched notes, yet also perpetually inquisitive, living up to Pee Wee Russell's favourite axiom: 'The more you try the luckier you are.'

All these virtues got unfolded last Sunday. The Sextet's performances followed a first half devoted to the pianist Keith Tippett, who nowadays unites an intrinsic romanticism with the all-out exploration of the possibilities of the piano (he seeks harmonics as diligently – and skilfully – as Evan Parker does on the saxophones). It's an approach resembling that of an illusionist. Not for nothing was Tippett's last LP – on Free Music Productions SAJ 37 – called *Mujician* (typically enough, the *Guardian* last week contrived to mis-spell it *Musician*). The texture of Lacy's music is rarely romantic, although it is never reluctant to draw upon the past. In the second number of the evening, Steve Potts, an alto saxophonist with bite as well as imagination, showed his commitment to the blues; Bobby Few, despite early classical training, takes piano solos that frequently communicate an old-time gusto. And Oliver Johnson alternates between using the drums to tinge or comment, and swinging in a fashion that goes straight back to Chick Webb at the Savoy Ballroom.

The Sextet contains only two non-Americans. Jean-Jacques Avenell is yet another of those bassists who have enriched the jazz tradition with the virtuosity of European string techniques (one of the abiding phenomena in jazz over the past couple of decades has been the proliferation of European bass players). The other is Irene Aebi, Lacy's wife, who plays cello and violin and sings with a brittle unemotionalism which focusses attention upon the words rather than the sense or style. Two of her songs on Sunday – 'Gay Paree Bop' and 'On Nowhere Street' – have lyrics written by Bryon Gysin, that protégé of William Burroughs. But Lacy's recent LPs, after all, testify to his growing fondness for composing around words. Hat Hut ART 1985/86 (an LP plus a 45) – *Songs* – contains the collaborations with Gysin, while *Tips* – Hat Hut 1R20 – presents compositions built around aphorisms and observations from Braque's notebooks.

Sunday's concert was, in fact, the beginning of a perambulation around the Arts Council's Contemporary Music Network. The Lacy Sextet (together with Keith Tippett) can be heard in Leicester this Thursday (11), then at Llantwit Major (12), Bristol (13), Sheffield (14), Newcastle (16), Darlington (17), Manchester (18), Leeds (19), Kendal (20) and Birmingham (21) before rounding off the tour at Coventry (22). It all represents a chance for jazz aficionados to hear an uncommonly exciting band, and one which, in its mingling of elements, reflects the stature and temperament of its leader: not only a nonpareil of the soprano saxophone but a died-in-the-wool jazz buff. □

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THEATRE

Benedict Nightingale

Messianic pigs

Coming Ashore in Guadeloupe
JOHN SPURLING *Upstream*
Nuts
TOM TOPOR *Whitehall*
Coming Clean
KEVIN ELYOT *Bush*

When Verrazzano waded ashore at Guadeloupe, plumed and exotically costumed, the waiting Indians waved and smiled and clapped. He thought he had rediscovered Eden; they thought he had come from some remarkably similar place. So when he landed they stripped him naked, still chuckling with affectionate delight at his whiteness, and ceremonially devoured him. He was the wild pig from heaven, decked out as a parrot: an omen of inestimable importance, a promise of immortality. 'Now at last man and gods are one,' they cried, as the last slice of *Verrazzano al forno* disappeared into their gaping maws. And so ends the most striking and suggestive scene in **Coming Ashore in Guadeloupe** and, with it, the play itself.

John Spurling's *The British Empire Part One* was largely about mutual incomprehension, and his latest effort extends that theme to parts of the world where the English were less active than others. It is an evening of constant discord, caused by the clash of cultures, values, legends, religions in Mexico, Peru and the similarly remote west. The spirit of discovery, seen at its most bizarre in those ransacking the Americas for 'the fountain of youth', rapidly degenerates into a mere search for gold, perhaps with some women to rape on the side. The Spanish commit the most glaring atrocities, but even Raleigh, who came to 'see and learn and act and be', is infected with the bacillus of quasi-patriotic avarice. 'Grown men stumbled on children and took advantage of them,' he laments. 'You asked us to be gods and we were worse than humans.' Moctezuma, betrayed by Cortes and (it seems) his god, endorses the point: 'I thought he would purge the world of sorrow; it didn't occur to me he would purge the world of us.' An idea persistently put is that the Europeans, arriving so impressively in their 'great floating houses', seemed at first to be the fulfilment of messianic myth; and the victims of this misunderstanding were, of course, usually indigenous Americans, not Verrazzani.

It is, on the whole, a grim and relentless story of rapine, and hence lacking in the variety and detail Spurling was able to inject into his *British Empire*. Moreover, Andrew Visnevski's production isn't particularly friendly either to the dissemination of complex information or to the sophistication of thought unpretentiously apparent in so many scenes. It is loud, at times strident and ungainly, and frankly somewhat monotonous, and, in its no doubt commendable efforts to make the most of scanty human and other resources, it succumbs to a 'theatricality' which draws more attention to itself than to what it is, after all, a subject well worth pondering.

Even Spurling's least naturalistic and, on the face of it, least satisfactory scene – Pizarro transformed into a contemporary Latin tyrant, then overthrown by guerrillas chanting bloodthirsty platitudes, as if to say 'logical legacy of the conquistadores, do you see?' – would be vastly improved with a little guile, more subtlety of timing, and a Catholic bishop who did not fizz and bop about the stage. It is, I suppose, too late to rejig this production; but when *The British Empire Part Two* follows it on to the stage, as I dearly hope it will soon, a more considered and discreet style of playing will certainly be needed.

ONE of my more shameful secrets is a covert addiction to courtroom drama, so I'm not going to pretend I didn't enjoy **Nuts**, which brings Anne Twomey to the London stage as a psychiatric patient appealing to a New York judge for the right to be tried on a charge of murder. But that unreconstructed enthusiasm couldn't blind me to her author's many self-indulgences. An expert witness is effortlessly exposed as the complacent ass we all quietly hope *soi-disant* 'experts' really are; the appellant's stepfather, having provided his quota of comic relief, is instantly transformed by cross-examination from an amiable blimp into a heaving ruin, brokenly rationalising his paedophiliac indiscretions; and the appellant herself, who has spent the opening scenes behaving in a plausibly erratic and conceivably even psychotic manner, becomes not only magically assured, but superhumanly eloquent the moment she enters the witness box. Indeed, so disarmingly wry is her New York humour, and so deft and persuasive her debating skill, that the only real choice before the judge would seem to be whether to recommend her to the Democratic Party as a liberal candidate for Congress or to Woody Allen as a scriptwriter. To say that this play takes the easy way out is an understatement.

Coming Clean is hardly more searching. The point at issue is whether homosexual 'marriage' is possible, or, at least, whether the need for love can be reconciled with the unruly sexual itch in relationships involving men. The answer appears to be a half-sad, half-glad no; but that 'no' would have more force if it didn't emerge from a triangle which, were it translated into heterosexual terms, would (I suspect) be universally shrugged off as psychologically and theatrically humdrum. Lines like 'from the first moment I saw you I wanted you, but I didn't think I had a hope in hell of getting you, and now I've got you, I'll put up with anything to keep you' – such lines don't become more real because the 'mistress' is a tenor, nor the subsequent interruption in flagrante more plausible because the 'wife' is a baritone. All we're left feeling is that clichés are coming in deeper voices than usual. □

FILMS

John Coleman

Rebus negative

The Draughtsman's Contract (AA) *Screen on the Hill*
Scrubbers (AA) *Plaza; Classic, Tottenham Court Road; ABCs Bayswater, Fulham and Edgware Roads*

After a very bumpy 185-minute trip down Peter Greenaway's *The Falls* two years ago, a BFI-funded event only minimally relieved by a certain dry humour, one went along warily to **The Draughtsman's Contract**, given pride of place on the opening night of the 26th London Film Festival this Thursday. Greenaway is something of an intellectual dandy, arrogantly playful to the point of tedium, and there was a calculated risk on the part of the Institute's Production Board in putting up half the money for a new feature-length Greenaway. The resultant movie finally came in at around £300,000, Channel 4 funding the other half, and looks, in Curtis Clark's lush and highly formalised framings, considerably more expensive. Mr Sainsbury was intent on bridging the gap between the sort of minority 'experimental' film-making that only attracts a minority's minority and the rankly commercial product gauged to the tastes of turnip-heads. (This is a drastic and actually false simplification of the issues that might be at stake; but, to read the mass of supportive material already engendered by *The Draughtsman's Contract*, one could be forgiven for thinking it boiled down to this: for one of Greenaway's refined sensibilities and procedures, any movement towards story and characterisation would necessitate a cultural cop-out.) Sainsbury sensibly helped Greenaway reduce a four-hour film to the present teasing, rarely toilsome 108 minutes.

It's a puzzle picture set back in the West Country of 1694, when an ambitious young Scottish Catholic draughtsman, Mr Neville (Anthony Higgins), strikes up a bargain with Mrs Herbert (Janet Suzman), mistress of the landscaped property of Compton Anstey. In exchange for cash, board and her sexual favours, he will execute a dozen drawings of views of the house and grounds in as many days. A contract is duly witnessed by the estate manager, Mr Noyes (Neil Cunningham), one-time suitor of Mrs Herbert. Neville goes icily about his businesses, running foul of the Herbert's impotent German Protestant son-in-law Talmann (Hugh Fraser) as he demands the chosen vistas should be unencumbered at selected times of the day, submitting Mrs Herbert during her husband's absence in Southampton to carnal indignities willingly coming to a similar erotic agreement (only *she* is to dictate the pleasuring) with the unsatisfied and enigmatic daughter of the house, Mrs

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Talmann (Ann Louise Lambert).

Meanwhile, discarded items of clothing – possibly the absent Mr Herbert's – crop up in the otherwise rigorously elegant and topiarised rectangles of alleys, green lawns and country-house appurtenances drawn with painstaking care on a grid system by Neville; he duly incorporates these puzzle items (boots, a shirt, a coat, a ladder even) in *his* pictures. The film takes on the proportions of a giant rebus, in fact, with Neville increasingly seen as a pawn in the game-plans of others: a potential begetter of heirs on the two women; an unwitting recorder of objects that may implicate him when Mr Herbert's corpse finally turns up in the moat; at the very end, after various interested parties have haggled and blackmailed over his 12 drawings, on a later visit, himself a ritual victim by lantern-light as he makes a 13th sketch. Throughout, a grey statue cavorts into mostly comic life, grinning at a child, pissing on a plinth, capering on a great gate: the close sees this running, jumping and standing still gag dismount from a sculptured horse, to plunge teeth into a pineapple bestowed on dead Neville.

The rebus probably spells out 'Greenaway' in the last resort, but on the way there we have had unusual pleasures as well as irritations. Against the near-Straub minimalism of static groupings, there is some very fair, often very fine mock-Restoration dialogue, stylised bawdy with a kick to it. Wigs deliberately go over the top in height and splendour; the eye is encouraged to stay constantly active; Michael Nyman's cleverly after-Purcell score is all of a piece. It is a cold film, out in a limbo of its own. Fascinating to see, though, what Peter Greenaway might do if forced – just for the hell of it – to make sense.

Mai Zetterling's **Scrubbers**, also and rightly on the LFF's first night bill, is produced by Don Boyd and co-written by Roy Minton but merciful miles better than *Scum*. Here it's the girls who are in Borstal and the system is unflinchingly shown as self-defeating: the emphasis, however, falls on the young prisoners themselves, brilliantly done to rights by an ensemble of mostly fledgling actresses. The screws stay pretty much in the wings, no less victims, one rather feels. Carol (Amanda York) and Annetta (Chrissie Cotterill) hitch a lorry-ride on a short-lived breakout from a minimum security institution. Annetta is picked up while visiting her tiny daughter in the care of nuns; Carol has deliberately crashed the lorry to get sent to a closed Borstal where her lover Doreen is; when Annetta also ends up there, she vows to revenge herself on Carol, who has meanwhile found Doreen shacked up with another and herself been 'befriended' by leather-jacket Eddie (Kate Ingram), a tough number. A marvellous, scabrous humour mitigates the quotidian horrors; there is an amateur concert-party set-piece of magnum force; the relentless days are finely punctuated by external night views, the girls rope-swapping gifts and messages from yellow-bright windows, howling songs, abuse and endearments. □

WEEKEND COMPETITION

No 2745 **Set by C. Fever**

Queen Victoria kept a diary. So, presumably, do some of today's royals. Let's have extracts. Up to 140 words, by 26 November.

No 2742 **Set by E. O. Parrott**

Replies from animals to poets who have written about them.

Report **By Fat Jeff**

A most uncomradely letter arrives from P. W. R. Foot: 'We've answered back so oft before/That now the comp's become a bore . . ./So fly back, Parrott, to your perch/And for the comps make wider search!' The Complex's disciplinary committee, whose rulings make Torquemada look like a milksop, will meet next week to decide on some fitting punishment. Meanwhile, eight quid apiece to this week's winners. I particularly liked Ransome-Davies's exquisite rhyming. *Venceremos*.

A toad on Philip Larkin

Why should I let this bald berk
Make me a label?
Aren't there enough tropes for *work*,
Without using libel?

Toads to the toadist poets
Are pustules of poison,
Writhing all over with gnarled warts,
That give you a *frisson*.

Writers with axes to grind
Never get it right.
They won't even peer in a pond,
To set themselves straight.

Just think of old Larkin's sheer folly
As he rambles and stutters:
Slow-witted, short-sighted and scaly,
Like some bloody tortoise.

BASIL RANSOME-DAVIES

The lamb on Blake

Come off it, Blake, look at the facts of life –
An old ram made me with his woolly wife;
And if some human calls himself a lamb
And meek and mild, I think it's just a sham.
For Jesus, just like you, had tastes carnivorous –
From him and all your kind, Buddha deliver us!

F. PITT-KETHLEY

The pig on Ted Hughes

The man stood with his biro poised.
He was paid, they said, as much as three men.
His jutting jaw, thick furrowed eyebrows.
These jotters stand right out.

His gait and native Yorkshire grit
Seemed to me a bloody cheek.
I was just a dead porker, not yet sliced.
And he wanted his pound of flesh.

He clocked me one with his fist.
It did not seem to bother him,
Smacking my crackling. His kind
Are always coining it with animals.

Even bacon deserves a bit of respect.
That includes bluff, gruff Northern sorts.
This git in the old leather-jacket,
How would he like to be soused in hot water?

BILL GREENWELL

The snake on D. H. Lawrence

Some creep came to my water trough
And stood there, hopping from foot to foot,
In his pyjamas.
I knew his sort – a poet.
The dark-haired ones are all right, mild drinkers perhaps,
But the red-heads are liable to fly off the handle.
He put the whole length of my back up, standing there
Like a stick of rock.
I could tell what he was thinking – they're all the same.
I reminded him of his penis.
So I thought, right mate, you can just wait till I've had my fill.
What a nerve! To think that the whole point of my existence
Is just to be a piece of his foetid imagery!
I was just framing in my mind some neat metaphor for him,
When he hurled a lump of wood at me.
Therefore I relieved myself in the trough and left.

N. J. WARBURTON

'Four-feet' on Kipling

I have done mostly what most dogs do,
And slept by my Master's bed;
But I can't abide (and I tell it true)
Two-Feet striding ahead.

Whenever my nose finds something new,
Or sniffs at a bird that's dead,
Two-Feet whinges, 'Oh, leave that, do!'
And tugs on my leash ahead.

If I wasn't as into Self as you,
And didn't need to be fed,
I'd lift my leg just an inch or two
On Two-Feet marching ahead.

NAOMI MARKS

TAKING PART

John McVicar

Boyling the prison pot

FROM WHAT I saw on my TV screen, Jimmy Boyle's first gesture of freedom was to hold his clenched fists aloft in triumph. It was suggestive of a fighter who'd gone 15 rounds – in Boyle's case 15 years of a life sentence – and was celebrating his victory. This impression of victory was reinforced by his bearing and answers at the press conference later. There wasn't a hint of defeat in his manner and not a trace of hatred in his comments about the prison system.

It was this lack of hatred which I found so remarkable. Many long-term prisoners emerge from the gates undefeated; however, their personalities are often blighted by a lifelong hatred for the system and, especially, for the people who run it. An ex-con can be law-abiding and fully integrated into the community, yet still bear a malicious hatred for anything to do with nicks or screws.

Prison regimes, of course, are not de-

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signed to defeat or break offenders. Their main purpose is punishment according to the lights of society (albeit mystified by the hypocritical reform ideologies of prison officials). The hatred that many ex-prisoners feel about imprisonment, though, is not usually rooted in resentment about the propriety of their punishment, or even deviations like beatings or unjust sentences. What infuriates and in the end often sours a prisoner is the sheer pettiness of the rules and the spitefulness with which they are enforced.

Boyle's experiences are illuminating in this respect, because he fought the system tooth and nail until it relinquished its natural pettiness and conceded the conditions in which a prisoner could 'decriminalise' himself. The story of the Barlinie Unit, in which he learned to write, sculpt and paint, is told in Boyle's book and in the TV film of the same title, *A Sense of Freedom*. The message of both was the same message that cries out from nearly all prison books and films: fight the rules and the warders, otherwise they will destroy you.

Critics of this view of prison life often attribute it to a misplaced romanticism for the underdog. But those who draw on prison themes for books and plays do seem almost invariably to stress the arbitrary and capricious abuse of power by the custodians.

It was Boyle's release which set me thinking along these lines, but what consolidated it was visiting a friend in London's remand prison, Brixton, a few days later. Garry Scane was remanded in custody on a fraud charge three days before Boyle's release; however, no-one could visit him for four days because overcrowding in Brixton resulted in his being held in police cells. Visits for such prisoners are theoretically possible but the system discourages them by making it difficult to locate where individuals are being held. In the London area even solicitors trying to take instructions often find it impossible to locate clients remanded in police custody.

Garry's lady friend went with me to Brixton. Linda is an engaging computer programmer who before this knew no more about prisons than anyone who reads the papers and occasionally watches TV. Although she was displeased with not being able to visit a supposedly innocent man for four days, she wasn't overtly prejudiced against the prison service.

We went through the gates and into the ante-room where one warder took down our particulars. Then, we took our carrier bag of food and a radio over to a hatch where another warder began checking the items. 'I'm afraid he can only have two bananas, Miss. Only two pieces of each type of fruit.' Prison innocent that Linda is, she took away the oranges and said 'We'll give him two more bananas instead of the oranges.' 'No, I'm afraid the rules state that he can only have two items of each.' We got through the fruit, then came the cheese – he could have the Brie but not the Boursin. And he could have milk in a carton, but not fruit juice – that had to be in a tin, but he could have a biro as long as it was a cheap one and the radio he could have – 'after he'd obtained permission from the Governor'. Rolls were allowed because 'they were buttered'.

After 20 minutes of this kind of lunacy, we went over to the security desk, where another warder instructed us to leave the rejected food on a shelf and searched Linda's handbag. He plucked out a pre-recorded cassette tape – 'I'm afraid you'll have to leave this here; we can't have you making a recording.' He was immune to the statement that this was an impossibility without a recorder.

While this was going on, the couple behind us began contesting the food warder's adjudication on their parcel. Their confused, bloated faces marked them as near dossers. They'd probably made a big sacrifice to buy their offering, but they'd been drinking and their protests were irrational and obstreperous. Three warders slung them out – the grossly overweight one who'd been dealing with us belly-bumped them out of the room.

Upstairs, as we waited for the visit, a shocked Linda reproached me: 'Why doesn't someone do something? It shouldn't be allowed. You should . . . ' I sat there shrugging my shoulders, muttering about gross overcrowding; untrained staff; lack of public accountability; and public apathy.

Of all the sectors of our Thatcherite state, the prison service is by far the worst. It's so bad that only ridiculous remedies make sense. It needs some kind of overlord with a sweeping brief to transform the whole system. The best we could hope for from Whitelaw would be a Michael Edwardes. But Hattersley could do worse than think about Jimmy Boyle. □

WOMEN'S EQUALITY UNIT

Southwark takes women's rights seriously

The London Borough of Southwark has taken the decision to set up a Women's Equality Unit to provide advice, assistance and support within the Borough, in promoting the interests and welfare of women, both inside and outside the Council's service.

Its scope and powers will be broad, covering employment, health, education, housing, safety and many other areas. So the Officers whom we are seeking to run the Unit must have considerable experience which may have been gained in one of the campaigning charities, a relevant branch of local government or possibly an academic research institution.

Either way you must have a good knowledge and/or experience of women's rights, equal opportunities and the broader issues. You may even have been involved in Government lobbying or campaigning for women's rights.

We are, of course, seeking people who will become fully involved, working the hours necessary to achieve the goals.

The Committee will consider all applications for the following posts:

CAMPAIGN OFFICER - £10536 to £11589
(Ref.NS/1/3397)

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICER - £10536 to £11589
(Ref.NS/1/3398)

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER - £7509 to £8145
(Ref.NS/1/3399)

Salary review pending for all positions.

Southwark is an equal opportunity employer. Applications are welcome from candidates regardless of sex or ethnic origin and from registered disabled persons.

Telephone 01-701 2870 (24 hour answering service) any time for an application form, or write, on a postcard to: The Personnel Officer, London Borough of Southwark, 25 Commercial Way, London SE15 6DG. Please quote relevant reference number and job title.

Closing date for receipt of completed Application Forms: 26 November 1982.

Southwark
a London borough

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Appointments

The Institution of Professional Civil Servants

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Applications are invited for posts in the Assistant Secretary grade responsible for negotiations, advice on policy, and a wide range of related duties.
Salary £10,891-£17,168. Six weeks holiday. There is a non-contributory pension scheme including the counting of approved superannuable employment prior to joining the Institution's service. Retirement at 60.

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A good Honours degree or equivalent, experience in trade union research and a knowledge of one or more of the following fields is desirable: labour economics, industrial relations, the public sector, pay structures and conditions of service arrangements. Skill in drafting policy papers and in the preparation of briefs over a wide range of subjects will also be important. The Research Officer will be responsible for leading the Institution's research team and will be accountable to an Assistant General Secretary.
Letters of application for all posts should include particulars of age, educational qualifications, present and previous employment. They must be received not later than December 2, 1982 and should be addressed to: **The General Secretary**
INSTITUTION OF PROFESSIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS
3/7 Northumberland Street, London WC2N 5BS

TRADES UNION CONGRESS
Industrial Relations Department

A vacancy exists for an

ASSISTANT

in this department whose work includes: industrial relations, trade union structure, manpower policy and equal opportunities. The work includes preparation of documents, committee administration and the representation of the TUC at trade union and other meetings.
Applications are invited from persons with a commitment to trade unionism and relevant experience and/or qualifications.
The salary scale rises in seven annual steps from: £8,977-£11,865 (including London Weighting).
If you are interested in this vacancy please write, quoting reference IR2, for further details and application form to:

The General Secretary, TUC
Congress House, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3LS
Closing date: 30 November, 1982
The TUC is an equal opportunities employer

ASTMS
Health and Safety Office
requires a RESEARCHER into
REPRODUCTIVE HAZARDS AT WORK

This post is for 6 months only and will involve collecting data; analysis and evaluation; and preparation of an annotated bibliography and review document. Applicants should have a degree in Occupational Safety and Health or equivalent, with a scientific background and some knowledge of toxicology, or relevant *research experience.*
Salary **£7,675 p.a. (pro rata)**, excellent terms and conditions. Location of work by arrangement.

Applications enclosing details of qualifications and experience with names of two referees should be sent to:
Sheila McKechnie, Health and Safety Officer
ASTMS, Whitehall Office
Dane O'Coys Road, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire
Closing date: 10 December, 1982

UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL
Department of Drama requires a

DRAMA ASSISTANT

The post carries varied operational and maintenance responsibilities and involves working closely with academic staff and students on a wide range of practical theatre activities within the academic objectives of this Department. Candidates should have technical skills in electrics and sound, and a special interest in lighting design. Applicants, who may themselves be graduates, should be prepared to adapt to the aims and activities of this Department. All work is carried out under the supervision of the Production Manager.
Applications and/or further details can be obtained from the:
Head of Department of Drama, 29 Park Row, Bristol BS1 5LT. Closing date for applications is November 26, 1982. Please quote reference NS on all correspondence.

DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION, CULTURE AND HEALTH

Principal Officer – Recreation

POST R3
Grade 55% of Chief Officer
Salary £15,291-£16,170
(Pay award pending)

Applications are invited for the above post which offers the opportunity of senior management within a department providing a range of leisure activities and facilities in a metropolitan county area.

The duties include the management of the County Council's recreational facilities including country parks, the organisation and supervision of direct labour required for the maintenance of these facilities and the organisation and promotion of activities of a sporting or physical recreation nature. The duties also include the management of the statutory functions of the County Council regarding public rights of way.

The officer holding this post will be required to prepare technical reports for submission to committees and where necessary to present these. From time to time the officer will also be required to deputise for the Chief Officer and to represent him at committee, Council and other meetings.

Application forms and further details may be obtained from The Personnel Section, South Yorkshire County Council, County Hall, Barnsley, South Yorkshire. Telephone: Barnsley 86141 Ext 266.

The closing date for the applications is 26 November, 1982.

South Yorkshire County Council is an Equal Opportunities Employer

South Yorkshire County Council
SETTING THE PACE

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GLC

Working for London

Six posts to promote sex equality and the welfare of women in London

The GLC has established a Women's Committee to promote the welfare and interests of women throughout London and to take positive measures to counter discriminatory attitudes which are to women's disadvantage.

The Women's Committee is supported by the Women's Committee Support Unit which is based in the Director-General's Department of the GLC. Six new advisory posts have been created to respond to the work generated by the interest London women have shown in this initiative. The Unit works on collective principles with some overlap of responsibilities.

Ethnic Minorities Adviser

To work on all aspects of policy considerations affecting the needs of black and ethnic minority women. To liaise with appropriate voluntary and other organisations and to work in conjunction with the GLC's Ethnic Minorities Unit.

Employment and Training Adviser

To work on all aspects of economic, industrial and employment promotion activities in London and to ensure that the needs of women are responded to at all times. To promote London wide initiatives.

General Services Advisers (Two posts)

To work on all aspects of public, commercial and voluntary services that affect women. These areas include childcare, housing, health, leisure, law and social security. Knowledge and experience of at least two of the above areas or other services which affect women are required.

Information and Campaigns Adviser

To facilitate public awareness of the problems and issues affecting women and to be instrumental in campaigning about these issues with London Boroughs, other bodies and women's organisations.

Grants and Project Development Adviser

To work with organisations submitting grant applications to the GLC; to work with groups developing new applications; and to co-ordinate the grant work with other Women's Committee Advisers.

The Women's Committee Advisers will liaise with a range of organisations and community groups both local and national and with local authorities. Knowledge and experience of the specific job responsibilities is essential. Initiative, perseverance and tact are necessary attributes.

Each post covers a main area of responsibility and applicants should state clearly which post is being applied for. All posts are suitable for job sharing. There will be some evening and weekend work. The salary will be within the range **£11,880-£13,353,** pro rata for job-sharing. This includes a London Weighting Allowance of £1,284.

For further details and an application form, which must be returned by 3rd December 1982, write to the Director-General's Department (DG/AE/NS/109), Greater London Council, Room 202, The County Hall, London SE1 7PB or telephone 01-633 3435/6651.

The GLC is an equal opportunities employer

CHILDCOURT

Co-Educational Boarding (Special Maladjusted) School, Wincanton, Somerset

A temporary vacancy will exist from January, 1983, for a well-qualified experienced teacher able to offer English as a main subject, plus additional skills for extra-curricular duties. Number on roll 46, age range 10-17.

The Principals with cv and names of two referees. Non-smoker/car driver preferred, non-resident.

Closing date: 1 Dec., 1982

OV SELECTION CATERS for the more mature person as well as graduates and 'A' level students with typing and office skills. Phone Odette Veazey, OV Selection (Emp. Agy.) Abford House, 15 Wilton Road, London, SW1V 1LT. 01-828 8345.

TOOLS FOR SELF-RELIANCE. Third World Solidarity needs Assistant Co-ordinator, practical skills, volunteer rate. Southampton area. (0703) 869697.

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ATTRACTIVE, DISILLUSIONED, lefty feminist, finding solace in books, mountains, fitness, 35, single, wants sweet, strong, unattached man for companionship/commitment. Any area, especially Herts. Box 5090.

ATTRACTIVE, ARTICULATE aspirant, asks affable, accessible, accomplished Adam for acknowledgement. (50-60). 01-870 4749.

CULTURED, GENTLE, woman fifties, divorced, slim, elegant, tall (5ft 8in), Hampshire area, seeks to attain a happy and lasting relationship with a warm-hearted, thoughtful man, who hopefully will reply to Box 5069.

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LINCS: LECTURER, fiftyish, urgently seeks warm, caring, unpretentious female, for genuine friendship. Box 5068.

LONDON'S FRIENDLIEST SINGLES CLUB, where people meet at parties, winebars, pubs and weekends away. Social gatherings of all kinds is your chance to start a new social life. Details: City Circle, 281 Finchley Road, NW3. Tel. 01-388 9273.

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SOUTH AMERICA Weekend. 3-5 Dec. Well enough known as a land of gauchos, llamas, Inca ruins and revolutions, but what else? We'll see through films, talks, slides, photographs, food, music. S.a.e. to Lower Shaw Farm, Shaw, Swindon, Wilts. Tel: (0793) 771080.

TIMID ANGLOPHILE, mid-twenties, seeks lengthy correspondence with British female of similar vintage. Interests: Brahms, Abyssinians, Goons, language, etc. Please write: Jonathan Angel, 678 Tennyson, Palo Alto, California 94301.

VERY FEMININE FRENCH LADY, joie de vivre, late 40s, wishes to meet genuine gentleman for outings and friendship. Box 5067.

WRITE FOR Money – with Wordsmith, the new writer's newsletter. Details: Wordsmith, Dept W1, 151 Harefields, Oxford.

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Meetings

FURTHER EVENTS in Feminism and Psychoanalysis series, 1.30pm, The Roebuck, Warren St. tube. 20 Nov: History – Sally Alexander/Alex Owen. 4 Dec: Literature – Cora Caplan/Claire Buck.

ICA EVENTS, THE MALL, SW1: 01-930 3647. ICA: NY NEW YORK WRITES a day conference on NY literary scene with ELIZABETH HARDWICK, GRACE PALEY & SUSAN SONTAG Sat. 13 Nov. 11.30-5.30, £3.50. Plus Sat. 20 Nov. 10.30-6.30 NEW YORK NEW YORK: THE THEATRICAL AVANT-GARDE – DEAD OR ALIVE? a day conference on the poetics and politics of performance with RICHARD SCHECHNER, LEE BREUER, RICHARD FOREMAN, RITSAERT TEN CATE, NED CHAILLET (Times) & JOHN ASHFORD (ICA Theatre) £3.50 bookable.

NICARAGUA & CUBA TODAY – a series of fourteen evening meetings starting 7 p.m. Tues. 16 Nov. Oval House, Kennington (Oval Tube). Sessions include: Political Organisation and Workers' Rights, Women in Nicaragua and Cuba Today, Education, Housing & Health, and The Law. 50p. Oval House membership. Further information Ujamaa Centre, 14 Brixton Road, London SW9. Tel: 01-582 2068.

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for free pamphlets, book list, programme of activities. Sunday 14 Nov. 8 p.m. Informal Q/A Meeting. 'Reincarnation & Karma'. Wed 17 Nov. 7.30 p.m. Commemoration: The Theosophical Movement. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, W2 3AL.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON: The 1982 Creighton Lecture will be given by Professor Ragnhild M. Hatton (Emeritus Professor, University of London) entitled: 'The Anglo-Hanoverian Connection, 1714-1760' at 5.30 p.m. on Monday, 15 November 1982 at the University of London, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU. Admission free, without ticket.

WHAT IS BUDDHISM?

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58 Eccleston Square, SW1
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Wednesday, 17 November
6.30 p.m.

'WHY BUDDHISM?'
Christmas Humphreys

Free Public Lecture

African National Congress 70th Anniversary

CELEBRATION CONCERT

In aid of the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College

SUNDAY, 14 NOVEMBER, 3.15p.m. Camden Centre, Bidborough Street, WC1

Works by: ALAN BUSH, DAVID BLAKE
Singers: JEAN RIGBY, GRAHAM TITUS
Conductor: GEOFFREY CORBETT and CHOIRS

Tickets: £2.50, £1.50 at door

Theatre

BARBICAN THEATRE. 01-628 8795, cc 01-638 8891, 24 hour info. 01-628 2295. Few day seats £3 from 10 a.m.
ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY
'HENRY IV' PT II – 12, 13 Nov., 'HENRY IV' PT I – 13 Nov. (m.) 18. 'POPPY' 15-17 Nov., book and lyrics by Peter Nichols, music by Monty Norman. THE PIT – 'OUR FRIENDS IN THE NORTH' by Peter Flannery 12, 13, 18 Nov. 'THE WITCH OF EDMONTON' by Dekker, Ford & Rowley 15-17 Nov.

CAMBRIDGE. 01-836 6056/1488. Evgs 7.45. Mat. Thu. 2.30. Sat. 5.00 & 8.00. A New Production of:
THE MIKADO
"This exuberant, gorgeously colourful production" FT. "Encores were demanded" D. Tel. "A Knees-up Mikado" Times. "It is all jolly good fun.. S. Times.

NATIONAL THEATRE. 01-928 2252. Olivier (open stage) 'Hiawatha', 'Guys and Dolls'. Lyttelton (proscenium stage) 'Way Upstream', 'Major Barbara'. Cottesloe (small auditorium) 'Other Places', 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'. See daily press for dates and times or ring recorded information 01-928 2256.

THEATRE GOERS please note: cc – Credit cards S-Student standby.

Opera

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Ends Sat. eves. 7.30 **HANDEL OPERA**
Thurs. & Sat. 'Hercules'
Fri. 'Xerxes'
16 Nov.-4 Dec. eves. 7.30
London Contemporary Dance Theatre
AMPLE FREE PARKING aft. 6.30 p.m.

Poetry

A PINE IN SOLITUDE – EDWARD THOMAS read by **ANNE HARVEY, TOM DURHAM, ANNETTE CROSBIE** and **BENJAMIN WHITROW** on Remembrance Day, Sunday 14 November 7.30 p.m. at Embassy Theatre, Eton Avenue, Swiss Cottage, NW3. Tickets: £3 (£2 students, OAPs, handicapped, unemployed) from Camden Box Office, St Pancras Library, 100 Euston Road, NW1 (01-388 7727).

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Publications

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SOCIAL HISTORY catalogues issued. A. C. Hall, 30 Staines Road, Twickenham, Middx.

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LISTINGS

Social/Cultural
Radical/Arts
Political

12-20 NOV

SEND DETAILS to: NS FREE LISTINGS at least 7 days in advance

FRI 12 NOV

LONDON. Conway Hall. Gay Humanist group meeting. Library, Conway Hall. 'Sex reason and emotion'. All welcome.
LIVERPOOL. Beyond the Regional Crisis – popular planning discussion series. 7.30 p.m. YMCA, Mount Pleasant. Org. by the Socialist Society. Tel: **051-207 0103.**
LONDON N1. Popular planning in N. London – Camden, Islington and Haringey. Meet Islington Town Hall, Upper Street, 7.30 p.m. Room 4. Tel: **01-437 2728.**

SAT 13 NOV

LONDON E1. Seminar on peoples health care policy in Bangladesh, 2.30 p.m. John Ellis Lecture Theatre, London Hospital.
LONDON. Royal Albert Hall, Kensington Gore, 1.30-2.30. Vigils opp. Remembrance festivals also, 5.30-7.15 p.m.
LONDON N4. Benefit for Troops Out Movement, Holloway All Stars plus supporting band. High-Life International at Sir George Robey pub, Finsbury Pk., N4. Tickets £2.50 or £1.50 u/w.
OXFORD. One day conference 'Feminism: Critical Perspectives' at Social Studies Centre, George St. Org. by Oxford English Limited, 10 a.m. £2.

SUN 14 NOV

LONDON NW3. Hampstead CND Gala Film Night, 5.45 p.m. 'Dr Strangelove', 'Children of Hiroshima', 'The Bomb' plus more. Tickets £3, children £1.50. Tel: **01-485 3067.**
LEICESTER. Secular Society meeting, 'Working for Peace', Pat Arrowsmith, 6.30 p.m. Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate. Tel: **Leicester 22250.**
LONDON N22. Cast Variety at Brabant Rd Centre, Wood Green. Comedy, Poetry Fun. 8 p.m. Tickets £1.50, £1 u/w. Tel: **01-487 3440.**
LONDON W6. To 4 Dec. Grove Theatre Club present Broken Token Stage Co. in two plays, 'Snatch', 'Tickertape with V-Signs'. 8 p.m. 83 Hammersmith Grove. Tel: **01-741 4031.**
LONDON WC1. Conway Hall, 11 p.m. Library. Peter Heales on 'Francis Bacon and the Great Instauration' and at 3 p.m. John Bradbrook on 'Science as a Problematic Area'.
LONDON WC1. Celebration Concert, ANC 70th Anniversary, Camden Centre, Bidborough St. From 2.30 p.m. Tickets £2.50 and £1.50 from ANC, P.O. Box 38, 28 Penton St., London N1. Tel: **01-278 3037.**

MON 15 NOV

SUNDERLAND. Poetry reading by Adrian Mitchell at The Royalty, 8 p.m. Tickets £1 (75p students, OAPs and unemployed).
LONDON N1. 'Do We Want Sizewell B?' Public meeting 7.30 p.m. Islington Central Library. Speakers: Czech Conroy and Anthony Kendall (leader Hackney Council). Also films, slides exhibition. Org by FOE. Tel: **01-254 2734.**

TUE 16 NOV

LONDON W1. London Friends of Palestine (670 5247) meeting 'Meanwhile, back on the W. Bank ...' Anne Scott (Bir Zeit) and John Rolfs (LFP) speak about the territories occupied since 1967. New Inn pub, 183 Tottenham Ct. Road.
LONDON WC1. Urban Policy in the 80s. Professor David Donnison. Gustave Tuck Theatre, University College, Gower St. 7.15 p.m. Adm free. Tel: **01-242 0363.**

WED 17 NOV

LONDON N12. Finchley and District Peace Campaign. 'A Deadly Business'. Talk on the Arms Trade with slides by James McCarthy. 7.45 p.m. N. Finchley Public Library, Ravensdale Ave. Adm free.
GLASGOW. Folk Night in aid of refugees in Lebanon. Star Club, 8-11 p.m. Adm £1. Org. by W. Scotland Friends of Palestine. Tel: **041-942 8804.**
NEWCASTLE. At The Poly, Anil, El Salvadorean Mime Co, 7 p.m. Booking recommended from St. Thomas Church. Days of Hope Bookshop, People's Bookshop and Side Gallery. Tel: **0632 320842.**

THURS 18 NOV

LONDON W5. CND Group meeting, 7.30 p.m. St Andrew's United Reform Church Hall, Mount Pk. Rd., Ealing.
LONDON WC2. Poetry Reading. Patric Dickinson reads from his new book 'A Rift in Time', 1 p.m. Arts Council Shop, 8 Long Acre. Tel: **01-836 1359.**
GLASGOW. By-election meeting. Support the Peace candidate at Trade Union Club, Carlton Place. 6 p.m.
WOLVERHAMPTON. 'Implementing Pickup' at Himley Hall, Wolverhampton Poly. Resources and staff development implications for polytechnics. 2-day conference, ends 19 Nov. Details: Paul Clark, Faculty of Education, Wolverhampton Poly., Castle View, Dudley DY1 3HR.

FRI 19 NOV

LONDON, FINCHLEY. Open University Centre, 527 Finchley Road. Registration essential. Seminar, 'Socialism and the Educated Middle Classes in Europe: 1880-1914'. Many speakers. Details: **Milton Keynes 74066.**

SAT 20 NOV

LONDON SE1. Positive policies for redistribution. Speaker Chris Pond. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. County Hall. Dets J. Gass. 23 Princes St., Abergavenny, Gwent.
CROYDON. Trestle Theatre presents 'Jack and the Landlord' and 'Creche'. 11 a.m. Mime, music and humour for children. Warehouse, 62 Dingwall Rd. Tel: **01-680 4060.**
GLASGOW. W Scotland Friends of Palestine AGM. City Halls, Candleriggs. 11-1 p.m. Tel: **041-332 4946.**
LONDON SE14. Goldsmith's College School of Adult and Community Studies. From 2.30 p.m. Volcano – an inquiry into the life and death of Malcolm Lowry. Tutor: Dr. R. Binns. 5 p.m. Tel: **01-692 7171.**
LONDON SE1. 2.5 p.m. Chile Solidarity Direct Links Conference. SCPS Offices, 71 Southwark St., London SE1. Further details: Quentin Given, **01-272 4298.**
LONDON N19. One day conference 'Building an Irish Solidarity Movement', 9.15 a.m.-5.30 p.m. Caxton House, St John's Way, Archway. Org. by N. London Irish Solidarity Committee.
CARDIFF. Wales L.C.C. Trade Unions and Socialism Conference. 10.30 a.m.-4.40 p.m. Students' Union, Park Place. Bob Wright and Tony Banks. £2 and £1 u/w. Details: M. David, Claren House, Cefn, Cribwr, Bridgend, Mid Glam.
HULL. Assertiveness training workshop focussing on childbirth, run by Hillary Ratna. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Hull Birth Centre, 57 Duesbury St., Princes Ave., Hull. Tel: **Hull 491982.**

FORTHCOMING

24 NOV. CAMBRIDGE. Radical Film Society presents 'The Maltei Affair'. 7 p.m. sharp. Cambridge College of Arts and Tech. Collier Rd. Adm £1, 50p w/w.
27 NOV. LONDON SE3. Sidney Hinkes on 'Can we make peace with the USSR?' 3 p.m. 7 Kidbrooke Grove, Blackheath. Tel: **01-856 6249.**
27 NOV. LIVERPOOL 8. Toxteth Women's Centre film show, 'Not a Love Story'. 2.15 p.m.
27 NOV. LONDON WC1. 'British Labour in Modern Industrial Relations' Society for the Study of Labour History. 10 a.m.-5.30 p.m. Birkbeck College, Malet St. Speakers: Hugh Clegg, Paddy Maguire, Richard Hyman. Tel: **Barnsley 85425.**

Sorry, but we can't accept entries over the phone. Entries must be received by Friday preceding issue date. We reserve the right to exclude items without giving reasons and are not responsible for errors. Space is strictly limited so if you definitely want your item to appear, we suggest you book it as an ad. under the appropriate classified heading. See main heading for rates, etc.

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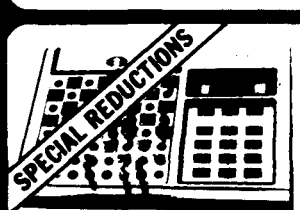

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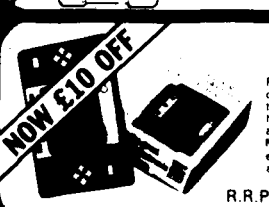

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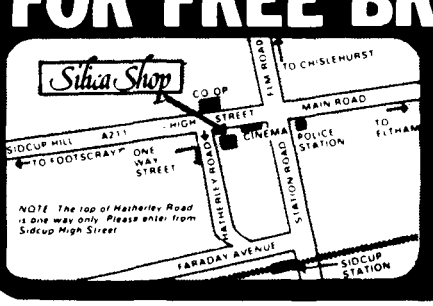

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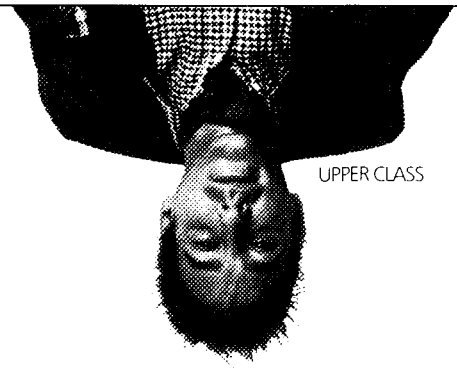

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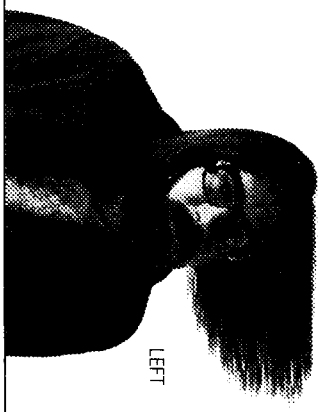

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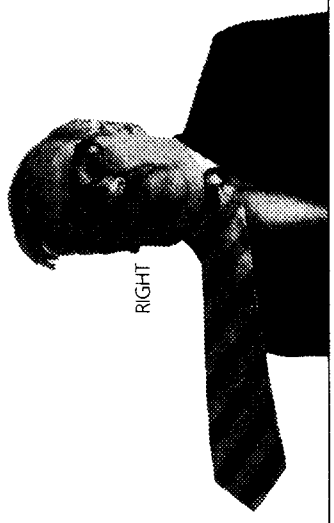

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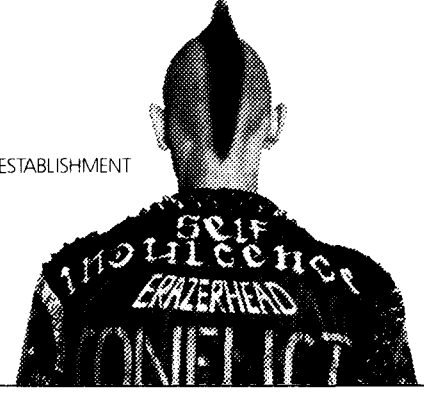

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